

A DISCOURSE
ABOUT
C H R I S T
AND
ANTICHRIST:
OR, A
DEMONSTRATION
THAT
Jesus is the Christ,

From
The Truth of His PREDICTIONS,
Especially,
The Coming and the Seduction of
ANTICHRIST.

To which is added,
A TREATISE about the
RESURRECTION.

B Y
Edward Bagshaw Stu. of Ch. Ch. in Oxon.

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INSIGNISSIMIS

ET

Fidæi Christianæ Studioſiſſimis Viris,

HUMPHREDO WYNCH, Equiti & Baronetto,

ET

JOHANNI BROWNE, Armigero;

Opellam hanc,

De J E S U & RESURRECTIONE,

Religionis noſtræ Fundamenta confirmantem,

ET

Piis, uti ſperat, omnibus non inutilem futuram

AUTHOR

Sui amoris ac obſervantiæ ergo

D. D. C. Q.

Edvardus Bagshawe.


A 2

THE
OF THE
WYNN & BROTHERS

THE
JOHANNI BROTHERS
Opposite the
J. & B. Brothers
Highgate Road, Highgate

THE
AUTHOR
THE
D. D. C. O.

THE
J. & B. Brothers



The Preface to the Christian and Candid Reader.



Although the Disputes and Controverses in Religion, have multiplied themselves into many large and tedious Volumes, yet, I believe, Christian Reader, thou wilt easily agree with me, that were but one Question rightly stated, and thoroughly believed, most other might safely be neglected by us, as Useless and Impertinent. And the Question is this, Whether the Scriptures be the Word of God; or, to use an Expression, which will give no Party offence, A full and perfect declaration of Gods Will. Were this but once really assented to, who doth not see, that all Additionals are either Impious, or, else, at the best, but needless and unnecessary Appendixes: much like rotten and painted Posts, affixed unto a stately Edifice; which do not only deface the Beauty of the Building, but likewise make the strength of it to be suspected. Since Scripture, if it indeed it did come from God; doth best alone, without the least mixture of Humane Inventions to underprop it.

*This therefore is that great thing, which in this following Treatise I have undertaken to demonstrate, in a Method, if my Reading and Observation fail me not, which none have attempted before me: For whereas there are two waies, by
which*

To the Reader.

which men ordinarily do come to be ascertained of the Truth of Scripture: The one, by an Inward Experimental Assurance; the other, by an Argumentative and Rational Evidence; The first of these I have altogether waved, because though Experience be an Infallible Argument to him that hath it, yet it is not a Demonstration that can be improved to the Conviction of another; And therefore I have applied my self wholly unto the second way of Proof; wherein dealing with men as men; and enlarging upon those common and known Principles of Reason, that all acknowledge; the Unbeliever, must find some stronger Arguments, than any I have yet met with, to justify himself by; or else, with me, be won over to the Obedience of the Faith of Christ. I do not speak this, as if I thought it possible for any Endeavour or Art of Man to perswade another to believe: but because this *ARTIFICIAL*, or Poize, to which the mind is brought by a sober and calm debating the matter on both sides, is that way by which the Spirit of God in Inquisitive men doth usually prepare an Entrance for Faith; for the strong man must first be cast out, and every Objection singled out and disarmed, before a stronger than he can enter in. And this, Christian Reader, is the very utmost design of this small Treatise, which I had never published, but that I thought it my duty, to impart unto others that satisfaction which I my self have received. If there be any that make another Interpretation, and from what I have spoken concerning Antichrist (wherein I have used the very Language, and, so far as I understand it, the sense of Scripture) will infer, that I am either for, or against any of the Parties, who now contend about their several Forms of Worship: They will wrong me very much, but themselves more; since the misjudging of others is an Uncharitable Presumption which is incompatible

To the Reader.

tible with a Christian Temper. What my Judgement is concerning Episcopacy, and how suitable to right Reason and Scripture that Order is, I have already asserted? And I think none are greater Enemies to Bishops than those who seek to establish them, by pleading a Necessity of Ceremonies, which whether they may at all be used, is a Question: but that they may very safely be disused, is no Question at all. It is therefore liberty in small things alone that I have formerly and do yet plead for; and that upon this single Argument, because I think Christ came to set his Church free from all unnecessary Tokes; and therefore it doth not lye in the power of any man to bring them into bondage again: And let but any sober disinterested person convince me once that the Church (i.e. where the State is Christian the civil Magistrate) hath power to impose in Religious Worship, and I shall then so far alter my Judgement, as instead of being troubled that we are gone thus far, be very sorry that we go no farther in our conformity. But till then, it is my constant Prayer, That, if our Rulers will stretch their Power, to make some Harmony between the Christian and the Civill State, all men may quietly suffer for what they cannot chearfully submit to; without making any more noise in the World, than what a calm and dispassionate debate of Truth may amount to. Had this Course at first been taken, we should not have had some cry down Dagon, and set up Baal-Berith, i.e. superstition, if not worse, displace superstition; and exercise a greater Tyranny than that which they complained of. But I leave this sad Argument, and entreat thee, Christian Reader, to look upon me as one, that, by the goodness of God, can call himself a Christian in the most large and comprehensive Notion of the Word; according to our Saviours explication, Whoever is not against Christ, is for him; and where-

ever:

To the Reader.

ever I see the least appearance of sincerity and uprightness, though in Persons differing from my self in Judgement, I can preserve my own opinion, without the least prejudice to that Charity I ow Mankind in general, or that endear'dness of Affection which is particularly due to all sorts of Zealous, though mistaken, Christians. With this Confession I close my Preface, and dismiss thee to the Book it self; which I desire may be read, as it was writ, with a single and unprejudiced mind. And if thou findest anything of Satisfaction by it, give God the glory, who hath made use of a very unlikely Instrument to do thee good by: But if in any place thou findest my Reasoning doth not seem Close and Pertinent, let me know my Errour, and I shall think my self more obliged to thee for thy serious reproof, than for thy partial and unweighed Commendation. Farewell.

Christ Church in
Oxon.
May 21. 1661.



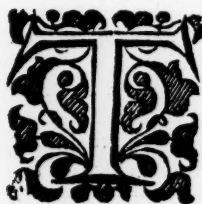
EDW. BAGSHAWE.



A Demonstration that J E S U S is the C H R I S T.

J O H. 13. 19.

*Now I tell you of it before it come to pass, that when it doth
come to pass, you may know that I am.*



Hese are the words of our Saviour, spoken by way of Inference or Use from the Prediction he had made concerning the Treachery of Judas; for, as we find, *v. 2. The devil having already put, or cast, it into the heart of Judas to betray him,* our Saviour warns his Disciples of it, even while they sate at Supper with him; and first he tells them in general Terms, that *they were not all clean, v. 10.* (to which the Evangelist adds by way of Comment, *for he knew who should betray him, therefore he said, ye are not all clean, v. 11.*) and then more particularly our Saviour explains what this *Uncleanness* was, and wherein it did consist; that it was, not a *Ceremonial*, but a *Moral Uncleanness*; not a *Filthiness of the Flesh*, but an *Impurity of the Spirit*,

Spirit, for, saith he, *He that eateth bread with me, hath lift up his heel against me*, v. 18. i.e. *shall betray me*, as in expresse words is declared, v. 21.

This Crime, which had been strangely horrid if a professed Enemy had done it, appeared to the Disciples much more incredible, in that it should be attempted by one of them, who knew him to be *the Son of God*, who had confessed, preached, and done Miracles in his Name; and now, in token of perfect Amity and Friendship, were all sat at an Holy Banquet together; and therefore that any of their Number should consent to, nay, promote so great a Villany, seemed a thing almost Impossible: And therefore we find the Apostles did dispute and enquire among themselves, and were so much surprized with wonder, that they even questioned the Truth of their Matters Prediction.

Our Saviour knowing their Thoughts, and being willing to appease and settle their Inquietudes; in this Verse he seems to grant that such a thing was scarce imaginable, that one so related to Christ, should yet harbour such bloody designs against him: But yet, saith he, as strange and as incredible as it seems, it will certainly come to pass; and therefore I acquaint you with it before hand, *that when it doth come to pass, you may know that I am*.

These words, *I am*, are capable of a twofold Interpretation.

1. *I am God*.

2. *I am the true Messiah*.

First, These words, *I am*, may signifie, *I am God*; so when *Moses* enquired after the Name of God, this short Answer is returned unto him, tell the people, to whom you go, that *I am hath sent thee*. And therefore in the Song which *David* sung for the Triumphant entry of the Arke this Name is recorded, *Extoll ye the Lord by his Name Jah*, i.e. *I am*; which implies and contains in it all the parts of successive Being, and therefore it is rendred by God himself, *He that is that was, and that is to come*, i.e. that hath one Fixed, Entire, Immutable Being. Now what God by *Moses* doth barely assert, by *Isay* he doth challenge, and demonstrate to be his due, by those two Incommunicable Properties of the Deity, viz. his *Power*, and his *Prescience*. And therefore when he disputes his Right with the Heathen Idolls, *Shew*, saith he, *the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods*. And in other places he tells his people that such and such Judgements, which he had threatened, should

Exod. 3. 14.

Apoc. 1.

Isa. 41. 23.

should come upon them ; *And then, saith he, ye shall know that I am the Lord.* So our Saviour here, being to take his leave of his Disciples, and foreseeing how shrewdly their Faith would be shaken, seems to tell them : You have indeed confessed me to be *the Son of God*, and therein *One* with God the Father ; this, if you judge of me by my outward appearance, or by the vile and cruell usage I shall shortly undergo, must needs appear to be a strange and irreconcilable contradiction. And therefore I leave you this Prediction, that when you see it fulfilled, ye may believe that *I am God* indeed. And thus *I am* is to be understood, in those words of our Saviour, where he doth expressly assert his Divinity. *Before Abraham was, I am, i.e.* According to my Divine Nature, by which I am from Everlasting : Of which Nature it is that our Saviour speaks to Nicodemus, *None hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man who is in heaven, i.e.* who is now there as God, though, as man, he be circumscribed and limited to a place on Earth. Joh. 8.38.

Secondly, These words, *I am*, may be rendred, *I am the Christ*, or *the true Messiah*, *the Saviour of the World* ; whose coming was so long ago foretold and prophesied of. This will appear by comparing two places of Scripture together, *Acts 13.25.* with *Joh. 3.23.* In *Act. 13.25.* the Apostle *Paul*, repeating the words of *John Baptist*, saith, *As John fulfilled his Course, he said, whom think ye that I am ; I am not*, which the Evangelist *John* relating, *c. 3. 28.* makes up the sense thus : *Ye your selves bear me witness, that I said I am not the Christ.* Thus *I am* is to be understood in those words of our Saviour to the Jews, *If you do not beleeve that I am, you shall dye in your sins ; i.e.* If you do not believe that I am that *Messiah* who is to dye for the sins of the World, *you shall dye in your sins*, and take the guilt of them upon your selves. Joh. 8.24.

And thus I take the words in this place.

From the words thus explained arise two Observations :

Doct. 1. *That our Saviour is the true Messiah.*

Doct. 2. *That the way for us to be infallibly assured that our Saviour is the true Messiah, is impartially to weigh the truth of his Predictions.*

The first Observation is, *That our Saviour is the true Messiah* ; Doctrine 1. and this will be of easie dispatch, because it is the first known Article of our Faith. I shall only briefly explain it. That which in

Exod. 30.
23, &c.

Pfal. 105. 15.

Ver. 7.

Ver. 6.
Heb. 1. 8. 9.

Joh. 3. 34.

Hebrew is called *Messiah*, in Greek *Christ*, in English signifies *Anointed*: And implies the solemn designation of our Saviour by God unto that great Work of Redeeming Mankind. For as in the Old Law, all that were called out unto any eminent Employment, either in Church or State, had an Oyl of a peculiar composition poured out upon them, which was a sign of their Inauguration and Installment from God into their Office. Thus *Saul* and *David* were anointed to be *Kings*; *Aaron* and his Successors were anointed to be *Priests*; *Elisha* and some others were anointed to be *Prophets*; (whence is that of the *Psalmist*, *Touch not mine Anointed, and do my Prophets no harm*, where the latter part of the Verse doth explain the former;) so our Saviour, who was in a spiritual sense to discharge all these Offices, was *Anointed, i.e.* filled with the Spirit of God, the gifts and graces of which were Typified by the Clearness and Fragrancy of Legal Oyl, whence that in *Psal.* 45. 7. *He hath anointed thee with the Oyl of gladness above thy Fellows*, is by all the Jewish, as well as Christian Expositors understood of the plentiful effusion of the Holy Spirit, which was to be upon the *Messiah*; for that of him, and not of *Solomon*, that Psalm was written is clear from the foregoing Verse, where speaking of the same Person, he saith, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*. And therefore by the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* is rightly applied unto our Saviour; of whom *John Baptist* gives this Testimony, *That God gave unto him the Spirit*, *ὅτι ἐν πνεύματι*, *i.e.* not in that stinted and limited measure, wherein formerly it was dispensed, but suited to the Largeness of an Immense Donor, and to the Capacity of an Infinite Receiver; who was God as well as Man; and by that neer Union did infuse into his Manhood whatever is conceiveable of Power, Purity, or Perfection.

And that this is the meaning of *Jesus* being the *Christ, i.e.* anointed with the Spirit, two places, amongst many other, will clear, one is that of our Saviour in his Sermon, *Luk.* 4. 18. wherein he applies unto himself that passage in the Prophet *Isay*, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, wherefore he hath anointed me*; *i.e.* By putting his Spirit upon me he hath abundantly fitted me for my employment. Another place is that of the Disciples, in their Prayer to God, *Act.* 4. 27. where applying *Dauids* words in the second Psalm unto our Saviour, *Herod, say they, and Pilate, together with the people of Israel were gathered against thy holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast*

hast anointed ; i. e. as Peter explains it in another place, Whom thou hast anointed with the Holy Spirit and with Power ; thereby enabling A& 10. 38. *and qualifying him for so great and weighty an undertaking. And so much for the first Observation.*

The second Observation is this, *That the way infallibly to prove that our Saviour is the true Messiah, is impartially to weigh the truth of his Predictions.* Doctrine 2.

Before I address my self to the proof of this, I must answer an Objection, which many may be ready to make, *viz.* That this is a thing sufficiently believed already, and therefore it will be only lost labour to go about to prove it. To which I answer :

1. That the greatest part of those who call themselves Christians are not so indeed : For as the Apostle saies of his *Thessalonians*, so may we say of most in our respective Auditories, *All have not Faith.* There being, in all places, many, too many, whose Conversation should the Apostle have seen, he would have told them, as he did the *Philippians* weeping, *That they were enemies of the Cross of Christ, for their belly was their God, and they gloried in their shame.* 1 Thes. 3. 2. For let us not deceive our selves, as if Vicioulness and Pravity of Life, could be reconciled with Sincerity and Truth of Faith ; but rather let us argue with *David*, *The wickedness*, saith he, *of the wicked, saith in my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes ; i. e. when I see the Actions of wicked men, I do as evidently perceive, that inwardly they fear not God, as if they did in exprefs terms proclaim and avouch it.* Phil. 3. 18, 19. So may we, without any uncharitableness, conclude from the Lives of most Christians, that their hearts are full of Unbelief : For there is so necessary, so inseparable a Connexion between Faith and Obedience, that they can no more be severed than Fire and Heat. And therefore, since the fruits of Unbelief are so apparent every where, it is our duty, not only to Preach, but to Prove *Jesus* to be *Christ*, that so we may root out those innate and soul-destroying Seeds. Psal. 36. 1.

2. My second Answer to that Objection, is, That the firmest and best rooted Faith is yet capable of an Encrease and Progress. He that believeth a little, ought to believe much ; and he that believeth much, may believe more ; and therefore Arguments which do enforce grounds of Faith can never be unreasonable ; for which reason it is, that though these Disciples did believe on our Saviour, had confessed him, and, in token of firm assiance, did promise

promise to dye with him, rather than to forsake him ; yet our Saviour thought fit to fortifie and strengthen them by yet more urging this new Motive, *Sc.* the event of his Predictions.

Having thus cleared my way to the Doctrine, and shewed the necessity of preaching it, I affirm, That the way to be infallibly assured, that our Saviour is the Messiah, is to observe the Event of his Predictions ; Because

Reason 1.

First, This is the way which our Saviour laies most stress upon, both here and in other places ; here it was the very scope and design of his foretelling the Treachery of *Judas*, *I tell you*, saith he, *before it comes to pass, that when it doth come to pass, you may believe that I am.* And again, when he had told them of his own departure, and that he would send the *Comforter*, that is, *the Holy Spirit*, to supply his room, and to make up their Joies, he adds, *And now I tell you before it come to pass, that when it doth come to pass, ye might believe.* Again, when he had told his Disciples of that violent and inhumane Usage they should meet with, *These things*, saith he, *have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them ; i. e.* And from thence gather a full and peremptory assurance of my Truth and Veracity. So in those many Predictions, which we have in *Mat. 24.* our Saviour subjoyns *εἰς τὴν γενεάν, but you look to it, behold I have foretold you all things.* So that our Saviour, so often urging and insisting upon his Prophecies, seems to intimate, that he was not unwilling to venture his whole Cause upon the force of that single Argument.

Reason 2.

Secondly, This is the way which God himself did long before point to, and warrant us in the Use of. For he foretels by *Moses*, *I will raise them up a Prophet from among their Brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.* This Prophecie our Saviour hath a peculiar respect to throughout all this Gospel of *John*, as *Ch. 5. 46.* *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me, for he wrote of me ; And Chap. 6. 38.* *I came down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him that sent me.* And *Chap. 7. 16.* *My Doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me*, which he oftentimes repeats, from whence many of the people, who heard him, conclude, *This is of a truth the Prophet ; i. e.* That Prophet, whose coming *Moses* had foretold. So in that last Prayer which our Saviour made on earth in behalf of his Disciples, he useth these words, *I have manifested thy Name*

Vcr 40.

Joh. 17. 6. 8.

unto

unto the men which thou gavest me out of the World. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me ; wherein our Saviour uses the very expressions that are in the Prophecie of *Moses*.

Now if any should object, as the Jews did, that our Saviour bore record of himself, and therefore his Record was not true: At least we ought to have some more convincing Arguments to prove his Truth, than barely his own Testimony. God hath, in that Prophecie of *Moses*, both made and answered that Objection: If, saith he, thou say in thy heart, how shall we know the word, or the Prediction, which the Lord hath not spoken? When a Prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken. From whence it follows by the Rule of Contraries, that if a thing be spoken in the name of the Lord, and doth come to pass, it is a certain sign that the Lord hath spoken it: According unto that of *Jeremy*, When a Prophet Prophecieth of peace, (and so consequently of any thing else) when the word of the Prophet shall come to pass, then shall the Prophet be known that the Lord hath truly sent him. So that while we are upon this way of enquiry after the truth of our Saviour, by seeking whether his Predictions have been fulfilled or not, we are in Gods way, and have his advice to warrant us. Joh. 8. 13.
Deu. 18. 20, 21.
Jer. 18. 9.

Lastly, The fulfilling of Prophecies is a much more sure and satisfactory proof than the doing of Miracles. As in Natural things, an Argumentative and Rational evidence is more convincing than a sensible one; for the one depends upon an alterable Principle, that is, the temper of the Body, which is subject to many changes and mistakes; but the other is bottomed upon an Eternal and Immutable Principle; i.e. *Right Reason*, which never varies, but, like Light, is always in every place the same. Hence many Philosophers have doubted whether *Fire be hot*, or, *Snow be white* in their own Nature, or not; because were mans body less patible, or his Eye of another Figure, he would not feel that force in the one, nor discern that colour in the other. But none ever yet doubted, whether *Three Angles in a Triangle were equal to two right*; nor, whether *all Lines drawn from the same Center unto the same Circumference were equal*; with many such like Propositions, because they are capable of such a Demonstration as passeth from the Eye into the Understanding. So is it in spiritual things, those who believe any thing merely upon the Credit of Miracles, have no firm Basis to ground

ground upon ; because (in spite of that received distinction, that the devil can do *Mira*, but he cannot do *Miracula*) our Saviour tells us, that *Antichrist should do great Miracles*, for sure *Τέγτα & σημεῖα*, i. e. *Prodigies and Wonders*, comprehend as much strangeness in them, as the word *Miracle* amounts to ; And in the Law God cautions his People, that if a *Prophet did give a sign or a Wonder*, yet if he taught false Doctrine, he should not be hearkned to ; which plainly implies, that a false Prophet may do *Miracles* ; so that he who relies wholly on them, is not certain but he may be deceived. Our Saviour therefore though he did many *Miracles*, yet he doth not bottom his plea to be the *Messiah* meerly upon them, but appeals altogether unto *Moses* and the *Prophets* ; and so did his Apostles after him ; and therefore the Apostle *Peter*, after he had related that he had heard a *voice from heaven*, whereby God owned Christ for his *beloved Son*, and commanded all to *hear him*, yet he concludes, that we have *πρὸς ἡμᾶς λόγον*, the *Prophecies recorded in the Old Testament*, and fulfilled by our Saviour, *βεβαίωτον*, a *more firm and stable foundation* of Faith than that Voice : Because that was a Transient, whereas the fulfilling of Prophecies is a standing Miracle. Therefore as some argued about *John Baptist*, *John*, say they, *did no miracle*, but all things that *John* spake of *this man* were true ; whereupon many believed on our Saviour ; So now, upon supposition that Miracles were ceased, (which I will never grant so long as I see daily supernatural effects of the Word in working Conversion, which when I was last here I did demonstrate to be as great a *Miracle*, as the raising of *Christ from the dead*, and the Apostle *Paul* doth every where cite that, as the greatest which ever God did) but if *Miracles* were ceased, yet if we find that all things which our Saviour said are true : That what he foretold should come to pass, is come to pass, then have we an undoubted Evidence that he was the *True Messiah*, and therefore to be believed and trusted in.

Use 1.

2 Pet. 1. 16.

2 Tim. 1. 12.

Joh. 6. 14.

The Use I make of this, is to exhort all persons, that they will take this method, which our Saviour hath prescribed, and by comparing his Predictions with their Events, ascertain themselves that they have not followed, as the Apostle *Peter* speaks, *σοφισμένους μυθοῖς*, *Artificially devised and well plotted Fables* ; but that they may say with *Paul*, *We know whom we have believed* ; we have searched and tried, and we find that this is indeed *that Prophet which should*

should come into the World. And this scrutiny I earnestly recommend especially to two sorts of Persons.

I. To *Preachers of the Gospel*; how unfit they are to convert others (which is the only duty and end of Preaching) who are not yet converted themselves I need not mention. And therefore it ought to be presumed of every *Gospel Minister*, that he himself is abundantly satisfied with the truth of what he delivers; and that he bespeaks his Hearers, in *Dauids* words, *Come unto me*, all ye that are yet in your doubts, and *I will tell you what God hath done for my soul*; i.e. What means God hath used to free me from the same unbelief which is natural to all. Such an one, who is thus furnished, must not only barely Preach, but he must Prove: He must not only Instruct, but he must Convince Gainayers, and leave the Unbeliever without excuse, that he may have no retreat to defend his Disobedience, but merely his Obstinacy. Thus did the Apostle Paul, who as soon as ever he was converted, *went and preached Jesus in their Synagogues, that he is the Son of God*; And again, saies the Text, *The more they raged, the more confident he grew*, Συμβόλῳ, *Arguing or strongly proving that Jesus is the very Christ.* And thus he dealt with those who came to him at Rome, *He expounded unto them the Kingdom of God*, διαμαρτυρούμενος, *Testifying, or vehemently urging* (as the word signifies, *Act. 20. 21.*) and *persuading the things of Jesus from morning untill evening out of the Law and the Prophets.* Thus likewise Apollos, *he taught the things of the Lord, ἀκριβώς, with great exactness*; and *ἐν τῷ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμεῶν Ἰησοῦ, He convinced the Jews with great earnestness, proving publicly that Jesus was the Christ.* These ought to be our Patterns, and it is, without doubt, one Reason, why the Gospel makes so slow a progress, because we do not begin at the Foundation — We take no Notice, that that which mens hearts most rise up against, is against *Jesus* being the *Christ*, and therefore here we should aim our Bittery, where the Enemy of our souls is most deeply entrenched. For our Obedience to the Commands of Christ cannot rise higher than our belief of the truth of Christ; and according as this persuasion is more or less wrought in the hearts of men, so will their practice be. Therefore as in Practice, Faith must precede Repentance, so in Preaching, the Doctrine of Faith must precede the Doctrine of Repentance: Or else we build without a *Foundation*, and throw about our *Hay* and *Stubble*, our own Idle Fancies, which will never

Plal. 66. 16.

Act. 9. 20.

Ver. 2.

Act. 28. 23.

Act. 18. 25.

Ver. 18.

7

1 Cor. 3. 11.

reach, much less pierce the Conscience: for all the while the heart is unconvinced it is unconverted. Now to convince others, there cannot be a better way than that which *Paul* constantly used, to relate the manner, and to enforce the *mediums* by which we were convinced our selves.

Deut. 18. 19.

Joh. 3. 36.

2 Thes. 1. 8.

2. I recommend this to *Unbelievers*, because all the while they are so they lie under the danger of many sad and dreadful Predictions. *He that hears not the Prophet*, saith God by *Moses*, *I will require it of him*. And I fear the greatest Unbeliever of us all would at that time, upon such a Summons, be utterly unprovided of an Answer. *He that believes not the Son*, saith our Saviour, *shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*; i.e. He shall bear his own burden, and shift for himself as well as he can, when he is to grapple with Eternal Vengeance, since there is nothing interposed to fence and to keep off that stroke; *For me*, saies Christ, *who am ready to do it, he scornfully rejects and refuses*. Hereafter, saith the Apostle *Paul*, *Christ will appear in flaming fire, to take vengeance of them who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of his Son*. I know very well that these will be derided by the *Unbeliever*, but if it shall appear, that other things every whit as incredible (nay, more incredible, since men naturally have some apprehensions of future punishment) have been foretold by our Saviour, and are already fulfilled; If this, I say, can be proved, then I hope the Unbeliever will be perswaded to shake out that devill which doth blind and possess him; and speedily alter his opinion, before his Case be desperate, and he find by experience, that all these things were sad Truths, though his Lust, and not his Reason, would not suffer him to hear them.

To direct you in this Enquiry, take notice of, and weigh especially these three Predictions of our Saviour, because we are all living witnesses of the truth and fulfilling of them.

I. Concerning the *preaching and spreading of the Gospel*.

II. Concerning the *Destruction of Jerusalem*, and *dispersion of the Jews*.

III. Concerning the *coming and seduction of Antichrist*.

Predict. I.

The first remarkable Prediction is, concerning the *Preaching and spreading of the Gospel*. There are two places wherein our Saviour prophesies that *his Gospel* should be preached *all over the world*. One is in defence of the woman, who poured a costly ointment upon his

his Head, *where ever*, saith he, *this Gospel shall be preached, ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ κόσμῳ*, In the whole world, there what this woman hath done shall be spoken for a memorial of her. Another place is in exprefs terms, speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem: And, saith he, *this Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached, ἐν ὅλῃ τῇ ἀνθρώπων, in the whole inhabited world, for a Testimony unto all the Gentiles, and then shall the end, i. e. of Jerusalem, come.* For the understanding of which Prophecie we must take notice of

Mat. 26. 13.

Mat. 24. 14.

1. The thing which was preached. It is called the *Gospel of the Kingdom*; and what that is our Saviour explains in his last words to his Disciples when he sent them to preach it: *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved the Messiah to dye, and to rise again the third day; and that in his Name should be preached Repentance and Remission of sins unto all the Gentiles, beginning from Jerusalem.* So that it was a Doctrine very incredible, it being, as the Apostle observes, *unto the Jews a stumbling block*, (that he should save others who did not save himself) and to the *Greeks Foolishness*; who could by no means endure to hear of a Resurrection, as we find by *Pauls* entertainment at *Athens*, as soon as ever he mentioned it, *ἐχέλευσαν, they mocked and slighted him.* So that there was little hopes of the Gospels prevailing by any Qualifications or Innate Dispositions that were in mens minds to receive it.

Luk. 24. 46, 47.

Act. 13. 38, 39.

1 Cor. 15. 1, 3.

1 Cor. 1. 23.

Act. 17. 31, 32.

2. The second thing considerable in this Prophecie is, the time when it should begin, viz. after our Saviours death. Had our Saviour sent his Apostles to preach this Gospel in his life-time, the Reputation of his Miracles, and the unexampled Holiness of his Person, might have given some credit and countenance to this Doctrine, and have facilitated its entrance; but to stay so long, till he himself was so shamefully put to death, and while the Fact was yet fresh in memory, then to send his Disciples forth; this seems, to the Eye of Reason, a Time very unseasonable. Yet, to shew how ill Judges we are of Divine Proceedings, and, how infinitely beyond our shallow capacities Gods designs are ordered, this was the time which our Saviour both chose and foretold: *When*, saith he, *ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am*; And again, *When I am lift up from the Earth, I will draw all men unto me*; i. e. When you have executed the utmost of your malice against me, in nailing me up to the Cross, then shall I manifest, what you do not now believe, that I am the true Messiah, by drawing and

Joh. 8. 28.

Joh. 12. 32.

Ver. 24.

gathering Followers unto me ; whereupon he compares his Death to the falling of Grain into the Earth, which doth not bear forth fruit untill it dye ; intimating, that what course they took to extinguish and hinder his Doctrine he would order for its Advantage and Encrease. And yet in humane probability this was not a proper time to preach up the *Messiah*, when, with the utmost of virulency and scorn, he was so newly crucified.

Apoc. 3. 10.

Apoc. 1. 9.

3. Consider the manner of propagating this Gospel, *κηρυχθησεται*, it shall be preached ; he allowed his followers none but spiritual Weapons ; and sent them to subdue a gainsaying, resisting, contradicting world : being armed only with *Preaching*, and with *Patience* ; and therefore what is here called, *The Gospel of the Kingdom*, our Saviour calls in the *Revelation*, *The word of my Patience* ; and *John* joyns the *Kingdom* and the *Patience of Jesus Christ* together ; as signifying the same thing. And yet this, how improbable soever it seems, it then was, now is, and ever will be the way wherein *Christs Kingdom*, i. e. *his Gospel*, is to thrive and prosper in : And whoever uses any other Force, but the Force of Reason ; or any other Art, but the Art of sound Persuasion to gain others, he strives to set up Christ the wrong way ; and makes our Saviours *Kingdom* to be that, which at his death he denied it to be ; viz. *A Kingdom of this World* ; against which I have elsewhere

Job. 18 37.

• *Sain ship no*
ground of So-
veraignty.

Lately, Consider the great Progress which the Gospel made, together with the short time wherein it was to make it : For a Doctrine so strange in it self, & so little advantaged by Humane Power, one would have thought, that an Age would have been little enough to settle it in any one Country ; but that, in the space of forty years, it should be carried throughout the World ; and in every place where it came, gather a considerable number of *Profelytes* ; this exceeds every thing, but our utmost wonder. And that the Gospel was thus spread, even before the Destruction of *Jerusalem* (which was the time allotted for it) we have the Testimony of the Apostle *Paul*, who asking this question concerning the unbelieving *Jews* : *Have they not heard ?* i. e. Can they lay the blame of their unbelief upon their not having heard ? *Verily*, saies he, *their sound is gone out into all the Earth, and their words into the ends of all the habitable World*. Wherein he applies the words of *David*, concerning the Sun, unto the Gospel ; which by the publike preaching of it, was.

Rom. 10. 18.

was then become like the Sun, in diffusive Heat, and Universality of Influence. Again, in his Epistle to the *Colossians*, he minds them of the Hope which was laid up for them in Heaven, whereof they had heard before in the word of the Gospel of Truth: *Which, saith he, is come unto you, as it is in a'l the world, and bringeth forth fruit, as also it doth among you.* The same is yet more plain from the *Epistles* of the *Apostles*, from whence it appears, that among all the Jews, not only in *Judea*, but throughout the world, in all *Greece*, in *Rome*, in *Asia*, &c. there were Churches of considerable numbers gathered to the Faith of Christ, and that according to our Saviours Prophecy, before *Ierusalem* was destroyed. To which I might add the Testimony of *Iosephus*, *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, and other foreign Writers, but the cause needs them not.

Col. 1. 5. 6.
v. 23.

So that put all this together, a Doctrine concerning Salvation by a crucified Christ, and therein contradictory to all Humane comprehension. 2. A Doctrine enjoying all possible strictness and severity of life, and therein little grateful or pleasant to Humane Desires. 3. A Doctrine excluding all force and violence, and leaving its Followers at perfect liberty, whether they would submit to it or not, and therein quite contrary to worldly Arts and politick Contrivances. 4. A Doctrine, by which nothing was to be gained, but only Heaven, nothing being more certain from an enraged, because unbelieving world, than the same calamity which befell the Author; and therein a Doctrine dangerous in Profession, as difficult in Practice. And yet in spite of all these disadvantages that it should run through the World, and have Trophies and Monuments of Victory, i.e. Churches behind it, in fewer years than some have taken barely to survey and travel it; This shews that the Power which conducted it was as great as the Presence which foresaw and foretold it; that is, that they were both, Supernatural; both, Divine.

I cannot pass over the fulfilling of this Prediction, without observing that they seem not at all to understand the Power and Spirit of the Gospel, who seek for secular Arts to uphold and support it. That Doctrine, which, when the World was prejudiced and Armed against it, did conquer and triumph over it, needs not any encouragement from earthly motives. It is still the Arm of God's Salvation, and needs not the Arm of Flesh to back it. All the while the Christians were a divided Body from the Men of the world, they, *Phil. 2. 15.*
shone.

thone like *Stars in the midst of Darknes*; and those who came not in to them, confessed it was for want of Courage, and not for want of Conviction. But as soon as ever God suffered the World to come into the Church, and that Religion grew the way to Preferment: presently what it got in power, it lost in purity; and quickly was dispirited, and worn out by that, which can act a part much better, and that is, *Hypocrisie*. To wish that Religion may again thus thrive and prosper, is to pray that it may be undone: For our Religion was not calculated for any thing, but to save our souls; and where ever sound convincing Preaching is protected, there is Religion sufficiently countenanced. For that Prophecie, *Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, and Queens thy nursing Mothers*, doth not signifie any Authoritative or Imperious enjoying even of the true Religion, but an Humble and Reverential submission to it, as it follows in the next words, *They shall bow down to thee with their face toward the Earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord*. Let Christian Magistrates do but that part of their Duty, which is to punish Vice and Immorality; and where the Gospel is planted, God will effect the ends of that without any farther assistance.

Isa. 49. 23.

Predict. 2. The second Prediction of our Saviour is, concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews: which is at large described by three of the Evangelists in their Chapters preceding our Saviours Passion. And though the present posture and state of the Jews, is a sufficient Comment upon those Chapters, and may seem to prevent any Enlargement, yet to make the Truth more apparant and forcible, I shall insist upon two or three particulars.

1. That the *City*, and particularly the *Temple* should be laid even with the ground; concerning the *City* we have this Prediction in *Luke*, that when our Saviour saw the *City*, he wept over it, for the daies shall come, saith he, that the Enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy Children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another. Concerning the ruine of the *Temple*, in *Matthew* we read, that when the Disciples came to shew our Saviour the buildings of the *Temple*, which, according to the description of *Iosephus*, for the State, Magnificence and strength of them, were the goodliest buildings in the World; our Saviour replies to them: See ye not all these things? Verily I say

Luk. 19. 42.

Mat. 24. 2.

unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down. And accordingly *Josephus* tells us, that the first thing which was burnt down to the ground, and that utterly against the will of *Titus*, was the Temple, upon that very month and day, as he observes, wherein it was formerly burnt by *Nebuchadnezzar*. And concerning the City, τὴν πόλιν, saith he, ἀφανίσων πόλιν, καὶ κατασφύζων τὰ τεῖχη, i. e. *Destroying the rest of the City, and digging down the Walls*, *Titus* left only two Towers standing to be monuments of the *Roman* Prowess. And that that Prophecie might to a scruple be fulfilled, our Historians tell us, that in the Emperour *Julians* time, when the Jews upon his entreaty went to rebuild their Temple, that they might offer sacrifice again, an Earthquake in the night tore up the very Foundations of it, and made them leave off their Enterprize.

Lib. 6. 7.
A. 17.

Socrates, lib. 3.
c. 20.

2. The second particular is, the terrible slaughter of most of them, and the utter dispersion and captivity of the rest. When ye shall see, saith our Saviour, *Jerusalem compassed about with Armies*, (which explaines that, that in *Daniel* and *Matthew* is called, *The abomination of desolation*; i. e. the abominable destroying Army of the Romans) then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. For these are the daies of vengeance. And they shall fall by the edge of the Sword, and shall be led away captive into all Nations. Which slaughter the Historian relates, Ἰάσαν, saith he, ἀδρωαίνοντες καὶ δαυμόδιον θοοῖς καὶ πλείστοι τῶν ἀπολλύτων, i. e. *The number of the slain exceeds all Humane or Divine Vengeance*; which though it be Hyperbolically spoken, yet he reckons up a Million and ten Thousand, which were killed in that year of the Siege; a number great, enough to justify his Passion, at least abundantly sufficient to verifie our Saviours Predictions; and for the other part of the Prophecie, namely, *their Captivity*, this was partly fulfilled by *Titus*, who carried away and sold near an hundred thousand Prisoners; but more particularly by *Adrian*, in whose time the Jews rebelling, under the conduct of an Impostor, who called himself *Barcocheb*, or the Son of the Star, they were then most miserably slaughtered, and an Edict made by the Emperour, that the whole Nation should be banished, that, saith my Author, none of them, καὶ οὐδ' ἐξ ἀπόπης θεωροῖεν τὸ πατριῶν ἐδαφός, not so much as at a distance, might see their Native Country. Then which a more cruel and barbarous, as well as unpolitick Law, I think was never made; to dispossess a whole Nation

Luk. 21. 20, 24.

Lib. 6. c. 17.

Enchir. 1. 4. 6.

at a time, without distinction of Innocent and Criminal, or any Provision to guard those Frontiers. But the more harsh and extraordinary the proceeding was against them, the more clearly do h our Saviours Truth shine forth, who had foretold that this should befall them.

- Lastly, The last and greatest evil that was prophesied of them, That the *Kingdom of God should be taken from them*; Thus our Saviour, *The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a People that bring forth the Fruits of it.* This I call their greatest evil: for if when the *Arke was taken*, which was but a sign of Gods presence, *Elie's daughter* called her child, *Ichabod*, saying, *the glory is departed from Israel*; How much more may we call that Nation now *Ichabod*, for the *Gospel* is departed from them; there is among them *no Vision*, nor in the *Psalmist's* words, *none that knows how long*? Nay, as if they had lost their Reason, with their Religion, they are so miserably blinded, and given up to such ridiculous follies, as we cannot but both pity and smile at them. *Origen* said of them long since, interpreting this Prophecie of our Saviour, This, saith he, we may now see verified, for all that is among the Jews, is only *Μῦθοι καὶ λῆροι*, *Tales and Trifles*, for they have not the light of *Scripture-knowledge*. And *Tertullian*, Now, saith he, they have left the *Fountain*, they have hewed to themselves broken *Cisterns*, i. e. *Synagogues among the Gentiles where they are scattered, in which the Holy Spirit doth not reside, which alone is the true Temple*. And in this condition they now are fit objects only for our Prayers and Compassion; and I wish that all Unbelievers would lay it to heart, that to slight the Gospel is not a sin that will be expiated with a little Vengeance: For I shall be bold to say, that it was not the killing of our Saviour, though a murder of a most execrable composition (for that our Saviour prayed might be forgiven them, who, we are sure was heard in whatever he requested) which brought down all that storm of wrath upon them; but their peremptory and obstinate Neglect of offered Mercy after it. This shall come upon them, saith our Saviour, *because they have not known the time of their Visitation*, i. e. they would not lay hold upon mercy while it might be had. And therefore our Saviour graciously passing by all offences, after his Passion, sends his Disciples first to them, and bids them begin at *Jerusalem*, and shewed how ready he was to pardon all, by his acceptance of some, and waiting long for the rest.

Mat. 21. 43.

1 Sam. 4. 11.

Psal 74. 9.

Adv. Cels.
1. 2. p. 60.

Adv. Jud.
c. 13.

Luk 23. 34.

Luk. 21. 44.

rest. *It was necessary, saith the Apostle Paul, that the Gospel should* Act. 13. 46. *first be preached to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of eternal life, i.e. think your selves too good to stoop unto Gods method of saving you, loe we turn to the Gentiles.* And when their malice stopped not there, but what they refused themselves they envied unto others; *Who, as the same Apostle observes, 1 Thes. 2. killed the Lord Jesus, and their own Prophets; and likewise persecuted us, forbidding us to speak unto the Gentiles that they might be saved* 15, 16. *then God could hold no longer, but gave the reins to his Justice, and now, saith he, the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.* So then, that I may conclude this Prediction with the Apostles exhortation, *They were broke off by Unbelieve, and we stand by Faith, let us not be high-minded, but fear; For if God spared not the Natural branches, much less will he spare us; And as Gods severity to them sets off his mercy to us, so the Conclusion is infallible, that unless we continue in that mercy, we shall likewise be cut off.* What was their Fate must needs be ours, if we consent to, and approve their sin; as all the while we continue in, or fall back into unbelief, we own and defend that Crime of the Jews, and publicly proclaim that *Jesus was not the Messiah*, but that he was justly put to death; and this is it which makes Infidelity a sin of so deep a dye, in that it doth *void us of our Covenant, Undervalue and disesteem the blood of the Covenant;* Heb. 10. 19. *and conceives, that it was shed by Christ not for the Remission of our sins, but for the Expiation of his own.* He then that dares not say, that *Jesus was justly put to death*, let him forthwith believe that he was the *Christ, i.e. the Eternal Son of God*; for, for the defence, and in the maintenance of that Assertion he died.

And so much for the Second Prediction.

The third and last Prediction of our Saviour, which I shall insist *Predict. 3.* upon, is concerning *the coming and seduction of Antichrist*: The words of the Prediction are, *Then, if any say unto you, loe here is* Mat. 24. 23, 24. *Christ, or loe there, believe them not: For there shall arise False Christs, and False Prophets, and shall shew great Signs and Wonders, inasmuch as they shall deceive, if it were possible, the very Elect.* In which Prediction there are these things considerable:

I. The Title which our Saviour gives to *Antichrist*; he speaks of him in the plural Number, *False Christs, and False Prophets*; implying, that there should not be one single Person, but a Combination and Conspiracy of Deceivers. And though the Apostle

2 Thes. 2. 3.

Paul, speaking of Antichrist, calls him, The Man of sin, and ὁ ἀντὶχρῖστος, that lawless one. And John calls him by a single name, ὁ Ἀντίχριστος, The Antichrist; yet I suppose that can be no more understood of one man, than the word Satan of one Devil; for in those words of

Mar. 3. 23.

our Saviour, How can Satan cast out Satan? And, If Satan rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot stand; Satan signifies the whole Commonwealth, if I may so call it, or Regiment of evil spirits,

1 Luk. 11. 15.

under some one Chief, called in Scripture, Beelzebub: Or as the Apostle Paul, in those words, For even as the Body is one and hath

1 Cor. 12. 12.

many members, but all those members of that one body, though they be many, make up but one body: even so is Christ; where the Apostle called the whole Church, as it contains both Head and Members, by the name of Christ. So is Antichrist, a collective body of many False Christs and False Prophets, united under some one head, for the better managing and carrying on their designs; order being so necessary, that, as our Saviour observes, Hell it self, which is otherwise a place of Confusion, cannot for the present subsist without it. But there is a twofold Order, an Order by force and constraint, and that is the Order of Hell and of Antichrist; and there is an Order by Consent, and that is the Order of Heaven and of Christ.

2. The second thing observable in this Prophecy, is the way wherein *Antichrist* should discover himself, viz. by being a *False Prophet*, so v. 11. *Many false Prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many*: So that a *False Christ* and a *False Prophet* is the same thing; the latter word being explicatory of the former. And this name of *False Prophet* is ascribed to *Antichrist* by the Apostle *John* both in his *Epistle*, and *Revelation*. It signifies in English a *False Teacher*, and so *Peter* expressly mentions: *There were, saith he, False Prophets among the People, so there shall be false Teachers among you, who shall privily bring in damnable Heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.* In which words the Apostle cannot mean, that they should deny the Person of our Saviour, (for then we could not have had any sufficient *2:17h; 107* to distinguish *Antichrist* by, since the whole Jewish Nation, and almost all the Gentiles, both then did, and still do they deny him;) but as among the Jews, those who were False Prophets, pretended highly to honour God, but yet taught lies in his Name, and secretly withdrew men from his service: So should these *False Christs* and *False Prophets* cry

1 Joh. 4. 1. 2.

Apoc. 19. 20.

1 Pet. 2. 1.

up *Christ* in words (*for, saith our Saviour, they shall come in my Name,* and he tells us that at the last day some shall plead for themselves, *Have we not prophesied in thy Name ?*) But yet both in *Mat. 24. 5.* their Doctrine and Practice they should directly oppose him ; and set up a Religion, which should have nothing in it of Christian, but the Name.

To find out what kind of Doctrine it would be that *Antichrist* should preach ; and what kind of Practice he should follow ; the best way will be to look in Scripture, what it was that our Saviour and his Apostles did most inveigh against ; for those very things *Antichrist* would set up and defend.

1. In Doctrine, you will find these three Opinions principally condemn'd.

First, *Justification by works* ; which the Apostle *Paul* spends almost two Epistles in confuting ; The sum of what he saies, is contained in this Position : *We know, saith he, that a man is not justified by the works of the Law, but only by the Faith of Jesus Christ ; and we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the works of the Law ; for by the works of the Law no Flesh can be justified.* And whereas many captious men were apt to asperse this Doctrine, as if it did open a way to looseness of life, the Apostle proves by his own example, that if rightly understood, it had a quite contrary effect ; since nothing can more effectually kill sin, than to behold it as killing Christ ; from thence he concludes, *Οὐκ ἀθετῶ, I abolish, or disannul not the Grace of God* *Ver. 21.* *for if Righteousness be by the Law, (i. e. can be attained by the observance of the Law) then did Christ die in vain ;* for what men might have got, without any satisfaction made in their behalf, that Christ needed not have died to purchase : And therefore he urges again, *καὶ ὑμεῖς ὅτι ἐκ Χριστοῦ, Ye are brought to nought from Christ,* *Gal. 5. 4.* *i. e. Christ is become vain to you, if you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace ; i. e. Ye do declare ye have no need of Grace or free Pardon, because you appeal to the sentence of that Law, from the rigour of which nothing but Christs Death could free you. So that Justification by Works, as evacuating the Death of Christ, and rendering mens Salvation as hazardous, and uncertain, nay, Impossible as before our Saviours coming, is a Doctrine perfectly Antichristian.*

Secondly, The second Doctrine recorded to us for *Antichristian,*

is the *Mediation of Angels*; this it seems, under the colour that it was too bold and presumptuous a thing for frail Man, to address himself immediately unto God; some false Teachers at *Colosse* did advise them first to pray unto the Angels, and make use of their Mediation to be the *Internuncii* and carriers of their Requests. This, how seemingly holy and modest soever the pretence were, the Apostle sharply rebukes, *Μηδὲ*, saith he, *καταβαβεύτω ἡμῶν*, *let no man Lord it over you* (or, *deprive you of the Prize*), *Θέλων*, being self-willed, or wilful in humility, and worship of Angels, *ἐμβατύνων*, Thrusting or climbing into things that he hath not seen; being rashly puffed up by the understanding of his Flesh; and not holding the head; where there are three Reasons given against that Opinion: First, that it was not Humility, as they pretended, but a wilful, stubborn, and fleshly Pride which occasioned that conceit; they presuming to be wise above what was written. Secondly, That they rashly and without warrant entred into things, which as they had not seen, so neither ought they to have medled with. Thirdly, And chiefly, that this Doctrine did detract from Christ, and lessen the sufficiency of his Mediation, who is the *only Mediator between God and Men*; and therefore that Doctrine, which brought in Angels as Partners with Christ, in that Incommunicable Prerogative, was *Antichristian*.

Thirdly, The third and last Doctrine which I find insisted upon as *Antichristian*, is the *abridging of Christian Liberty*; by obtruding upon the conscience of weaker Brethren, the observance of things either Unnecessary, or else very Inconvenient; such were the *observation of Daies and Months, and Times and Years*, i. e. the old Legal Festivals, or some others like them, by way of Analogy, among the *Galatians*; which the Apostle sharply reproves; first, calling them *Weak and beggarly Elements or Rudiments*, not fit to be always pored upon by Christians of any growth or stature; and then tells them, that *he fears he had lost his time and pains among them*; for he preached up *Liberty*, at another Rate, which they were not to slight and undervalue, it being a part of our Saviours purchase. So when some, among the *Colossians*, began to preach up and prescribe an uncommanded strictness and singularity of Life, in those words, *Touch not, taste not, handle not*, laying a great stress of Piety in outward Abstinence; he blames them, *Τὶ δογματίζεσθε*, *Why are ye loaded and burdened with these new Rites and Ordinances? which are* after

Col. 2. 18, 19.

1 Tim 2. 5.

Gal. 4. 9.
Col. 2. 16.

Gal. 5. 1.

Col. 2. 21.

after the Doctrine and Commandments of Men ; and therefore, as they ought not to be enjoined, so need they not to be any farther practised by you than suits with your own Convenience. Nay, in this Epistle to Timothy to command *Abstinence from Meats*, and to forbid Marriage ; though he himself, and common experience tells us, that *Kαλὸν, i.e. it is much more convenient* to be free, than bound in Wedlock, yet he calls that Doctrine, the *Doctrine of Devils*, and therefore I need not scruple to call it *Antichristian*.

1 Tim. 4. 1.

Besides these three, I do not remember that in the New Testament I find any Tenet branded as Antichristian ; for though there are many other things, as *Free-will, Merit, Worship of Images, Not sanctifying of the Lords day, or one day in seven* ; and the like, which are severely condemned as False and Impious ; yet I call that only *Antichristian* which directly opposes Christ in some of his Offices, or in his Purchase and Acquisition for believers.

And so much for that which was to be the Doctrine of Antichrist.

2. The Practice of *Antichrist* is recorded to discover it self in these three things :

First, *Pride*, whereby he opposes our Saviours *Humility and self-denial*. For thus our Saviours stinting that Ambitious strife of his Disciples, concerning *who should be greatest* : The Rulers of the Heathen, saith he, *do exercise Lordship over them ; but it shall not be so among you* ; but he that will be *greater*, affect the Primacy amongst you, let him be servant of all ; and to enforce this, our Saviour urges his own Example, *Even*, saith he, *as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*. And as for Power, so for Titles of Honour ; our Saviour forbidding his Disciples, to imitate the practice of the *Pharisees*, who were puffed up and swelled with those Airy and Empty names of Honour amongst men. *Be not ye*, saith he, *called Doctor, or Master, or Father, or Teacher, i.e. Affect not to be so called, for you have one Teacher, which is Christ : Ye have one Father which is in Heaven ; but all ye are Brethren*. And therefore take heed lest by taking upon you such glorious stiles, you forget that Equality which should be amongst brethren. Thus Christ. But *Antichrist* thinks no Power too great, no Name too good for him : And therefore the Apostle Paul gives this Character of him that he is one *who opposeth himself (i.e. against Christ) and exalts himself above all that is called God, or Σεβαστα, (which word I take to signify the Imperial stile, for the Emperour in*

Mat. 20. 25.

Mat. 23. 8.

2 Thes. 2. 4.

Act. 25. 21.

Latine

Latine was called *Augustus*, in Greek *Σίσας*, and then it signifies, that Antichrist should advance himself above all *Princes* and *Emperours*) *So that he shall sit as a God, in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God; i. e.* assuming unto himself the exercise of Divine Power and Honour, as if he were a God on Earth; which whoever doth must needs in that be *Antichrist, i. e.* oppose the Humility both practised and prescribed by *Christ*.

Secondly, The second thing, wherein the Practice of *Antichrist* was to discover it self, is *Pompe*, as it is opposed to Christian *Poverty*. I know very well that *Poverty* and *Riches* are *res media*, that in themselves neither state doth make us more or less accepted to God: But yet such hath been and is the Fate of true Religion, that *Riches*, most commonly, are the Portion of the men of this world, out of which Christianity calls its followers but *Disgraces*, *Losses*, and *Poverty* are most usually the Attendants on strictness and Holiness: Thus our Saviour affirms the condition of *Beasts of the Earth*, and *Birds of the Heaven*, to be, in outward respects, much better than his, *For the one, saith he, have holes, the other have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head*: And thereupon calls his Followers to *leave every thing, i. e.* to be in a readiness to hazard all rather than to quit their profession, or else *they were not fit to be his Disciples*. But *Antichrist*, quite contrary, proposes worldly wealth, and Temporal Rewards unto his Followers; and seeks to reconcile Piety and Preferment, *i. e.* self-denial with that which doth directly contradict it. For which reason, I suppose, it is, that the Apostle *John*, having premised that *the Love of the World was Enmity unto God*; for, *whatever is in the World, the desire of the Flesh, (i. e. Pleasure;) the desire of the Eyes, (i. e. Riches;) and the pride of Life, (i. e. outward State and Magnificence,) they are not of God, but of the World*. To which he immediately subjoins, *Little children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard, that Antichrist shall come, so now there are many Antichrists*: Plainly intimating, that there were some, who, by immersing themselves in the Delights and Excesses of the World, did abundantly discover their *Antichristian* temper. And accordingly in the *Revelation*, that *Woman*, which figured the true Church, as soon as ever *she had brought forth, i. e.* received and embraced the Faith of *Christ*, *she is said to flee into the Wilderness*, where she was to abide for a long time in a disconsolate and afflicted condition; where it is observable, that the time, *viz.* of

Mat. 8. 20.

Luk. 14. 26, &c.

1 Joh. 2. 16.

Ver. 18.

Apoc. 12.

1260. daies, which is allotted unto the *womans abode in the Wilderness*, is the very same time, in which the *Witnesſes were to Prophecy*, *μαρτυροῦντες* being arrayed with sackcloth; to shew their indigent and needy state, as likewise the *Temple*, or true worshippers of God, was so long to be trampled under foot, which likewise is the time limited for Antichrists Reign and Persecution. Thus the true Church, like Christ her Head, finds no peace on Earth, but is fain to seek shelter in a *Wilderness*. But that woman, which is the Embleme of the *False Church*, is represented to sit in goodly Array upon a scarlet-coloured Beast: And the woman was clothed with Purple and Scarlet, and adorned with Gold, and precious Stones, and Pearls; i.e. Tricked up and set out with the utmost circumstances of outward Glory and Magnificence, by which she doth allure and entice her Followers; making her Religion as pompous, Theatrical, and specious as may be, that so it might be taking. But we have not so learned Christ, who was himself poor, and his Doctrine strict and severe; so that to take off from the end of Religion, which is to withdraw men from Earth, that they may mind Heaven; and to change the Spirit and Purity of Worship into the splendor and pompe of Service, this is not of Christ, therefore it is *Antichristian*.

Thirdly, The third and last thing in the practice of *Antichrist*, by which he may be desried is *Persecution* of all that dissent from him, though never so holy or Religious otherwise; which is an infallible Note of Antichrist, as being directly contrary to the *Meekness, Mercy, and Moderation* of our Saviour. For when the Disciples desired that they might call down for Fire from Heaven, to punish those Barbarous and Inhumane *Samaritans*, who would not so much as allow him a lodging in one of their Villages; Our Saviour sharply reproves them, *Ye know not*, saith he, *of what spirit you are*; i.e. the Christian spirit is not a bloody, a self-avenging: but a tender, a compassionate spirit; *For the Son of man came not to destroy mens lives, but to save them*. And again, when some of his Disciples told him, that they found some doing miracles in his name, but they forbade them; because, say they, they followed not us. Forbid them not, saith our Saviour, *for he that is not against us, is for us*. Thus the Apostle Paul, Let every man, saith he, *απολογησθω*, be fully assured in his own mind, i.e. of the Necessity and Lawfulness of that which he doth; And judge not one another, but judge this rather, that none

Rev. 17 3.

Luk. 9. 55.

1b. v. 50.

Rom. 14.

16.

do.

2 Cor. 1. 24:

Phil. 3. 15.

Mat. 7.

Rev. 13. 16, 17.

R. v. 18. 13.

Rev. 19. 10.

do put a stumbling block, or a cause of offence before his Brother. And again, *We*, saith he, *οὐ κωλύομεν*, do not Lord it over your Faith, or Conscientious Persuasion in things indifferent; but if any be otherwise-minded God will reveal this to him; with many hundreds of Scriptures more to the same purpose, which shew, that nothing doth more favour of the spirit of Christianity than Mutual Forbearance and Toleration. And that nothing is more repugnant to it, then Harshness, Rigour, and Imperious Exaction. But *Antichrist*, quite contrary, is all made up of cruelty and unmercifulness; *The false Prophets*, saith our Saviour, *which come in my Name, they wear sheeps-cloathing, but inwardly they are ravening Wolves*; i.e. They seem mild and gentle, but indeed are Furious, and bloud-thirsty men; and therefore in the *Revelation*, *Antichrist* is compared unto a Beast which hath horns like a Lambe (i.e. in outward appearance seems to act for Christ) but *speaks like a Dragon*, i.e. in his Decrees and Impositions is Outragious and Bloudy; Insomuch, *that he causeth all, great and small, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their Foreheads, or in their hands*; *That no man might buy or sell, save he that had that mark*, i.e. They were either to joyn with him in his publike Worship, and by some outward Testimony manifest their Conformity, or else they should not buy nor sell, i.e. not so much as exercise any civill Commerce or Sociery with men: Nor is that all, that he will exclude such from the benefits of Life, *But*, saith the Text, *if men will not worship the beast, and that Image which he hath set up, οὐκ ἔστι βίη ἀποκτανθῆναι*, he causes that they be slain; which is the utmost expression of Inhumanity: and therefore among the Merchandize of the *False Church*; here are reckoned, *ψυχὰς ἀνθρώπων*, the souls or lives of men, either bestained and poysoned with their Inventions, or destroyed by their Butchery. So infinitely different is *Antichrist* from Christ. Christ would not have the least of those offended that believe on him; *Antichrist* doth nothing else but offend them. And so much for the second thing in our Saviours Prediction, viz. The way how *Antichrist* or the *False Prophet* is to be destroyed; in the decyphering of which, I have purely followed that Method, which the Spirit of Prophecie, which is called the Testimony of Jesus in Scripture, hath chalked out to me, without mingling the least of my own Inventions and uncharitable Presumptions with it.

3. The third thing observable in our Saviours Prediction, is the
Time

Time when Antichrist should arise; which is implied in the word *τῆς, then*, i. about the Time that *Jerusalem* was destroyed; which that it was a very proper time for *Antichrist* to arise in, will appear from these two Reasons.

1. Because then the Apostles, and others, who planted Christianity, and were infallibly inspired by God, were all dead; and therefore when these Suns were Set, it is no wonder if *Darkness* and *Night* did speedily overspread the World. This is plainly intimated by our Saviour, where he tells his Disciples, that before *Jerusalem* was destroyed, *They shall*, saith he, *deliver you up* Mat. 24. 9. 11. *unto Tribulation, and they shall kill you*; whereupon immediately he adds, *And many false Prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many*. As when the Banks and Bounds are broken down, the River presently doth overflow the Valleys, so when the Apostles were gone, who were to stand in the Breach, and to resist the Torrent, Corruption and Will-worship did, like a deluge, over-run the World; as *Hegeſippus*, *Eusebius*, and other Ecclesiastical Writers, do both mention and sadly complain of.

2. Because I take the *Spirit of Antichrist*, as I find it discovered in Scripture, to consist in *φιλοπονητεία*, i. e. *An ambitious affectation of Sovereignty or Dominion*, or in a word, *A Love of Primacy*. This the Apostle censures in *Diotrephes*, that he was *φιλοπρωτεύων*, i. e. *He loved to be first or chief*, and took upon him *ἐξουσίαν τῆς ἐκκλησίας*, i. e. *the sole power to excommunicate*. Now while *Jerusalem* was standing in its glory, no Church could vie with that for superiority, as being undoubtedly the *Mother Church*, from whence all the rest did proceed: But as soon as ever the *τὸ κατέχον*, i. e. *the Jewish State* was removed, then the biggest City laid claim to be the best Church, and never rested till it had fixed in it self a spiritual, as before it had done a temporal and earthly Dominion.

I know very well that the *τὸ κατέχον*, or *ὁ κατέχων*, i. e. *He which withholdeth, or bindeth*, i. e. *Keepeth Antichrist* from appearing, is commonly understood of the *Civill Empire of Rome*, so *Tertullian* in his *Apology*, and other of the Ancients; but for the former Reasons I think it is rather to be meant of the *Jewish State*; as likewise, because the Apostle in the same place saith, that the *Mystery of Iniquity was then working*; and *John* saies, that *Antichrist*

Apol. c. 32 &
ad Scap. c. 2.
P. x. c. xv.
Hæc. c. 27.

2 Joh. 2.
& c. 4.

1 Thes. 2.

christ was then come; whereas there was no considerable change in the Empire of *Rome*, for some hundreds of years after. But *Jerusalem* was destroyed within few years after the Apostle *Pauls* Death, and he seems to intimate that he saw some evident Symptoms of, and Preparations of it, even in his own time, in those words of his, *The wrath, i. e. threatened by our Saviour, is come upon them to the uttermost*. But *John* did survive the ruine of that City, whereupon he saies, that *Antichrist was then come*; the τὸ κατ' ἄνθρωπον, mentioned by the Apostle *Paul*, being in his time removed.

Euseb. l. 4.
c. 24.

Having thus fixed the *Rise of Antichrist* upon the destruction of *Jerusalem*, we must take notice that there is a threefold *Epoche* or account of time, from whence we may date the ruine of that City: The first was in the time of *Vespasian*, about forty years after our Saviour, and then *Antichrist* was working, being then in his seeds and beginnings. The second was under *Adrian*, about 150 years after our Saviour; and then *Antichrist* was come to some consistence and maturity, for to pass by the False and Unsound Doctrines and corrupt Practices of that Age, as their enveighing against the *Marriages*, especially the *second marriages of Ministers*; their *Use of the Cross*, and counting it a kind of Charm; their *voluntary Fasting and Penance*, and placing some kind of holiness in the unmarried state, as may be seen at large in *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others. But to pass by these, about *Adrians* time it was, that *Victor*, the Bishop of *Rome*, did take upon him to excommunicate all the *Eastern Bishops* that did not solemnize *Easter* at the same time with him; by which Irregular and Presumptuous Decree, he did not only take that for granted, which I think is very questionable, viz. the keeping of *Easter*, I mean upon a Religious account, but likewise he assumed a power which did not belong to him; and sufficiently shews that that Church was then aiming at Empire and Rule rather than Religion. The third and last date of *Jerusalems* Ruine was in *Julian's* time, when the Temple was torne up by an Earthquake, and that Prophecy of our Saviour literally fulfilled, that *there should not be left there one stone upon another*. And about this time, it would be endless to recount the infinite abuses and errors which were not only crept into, but had credit and countenance in

in the Church. The Doctrine of Merit and Justification by Works; the Worship of Angels; the forbidding of Marriage, and Abstaining from Meats, being publicly owned, and this last so rigorously pressed, that *Socrates*, a learned and moderate Historian, observes, ἀδιαφοροῦν μὲν πᾶσαν πορνείαν ἡγούμενοι, μετὰ δὲ ἡμετέρῳ ἐορτῇ αἰσιν περὶ ψυχῆς ἀγῶνιστοῦται. They count, saith he, Fornication and all uncleanness an indifferent and dispensable fault; but about their Feast and Fast daies, they contend as for their lives, he adds, αὐτοὶ περὶ τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐντολῶν, καὶ νομοθετούντες ἑαυτοῖς, quite perverting the Commands of God, and giving Laws unto themselves. At the same time likewise were appeals made unto Rome, to *Julius the Bishop* there, as the Judge of Civil Controversies; and a Decree either made or tacitly assented to, that no Act of a Council should be valid at which the Bishop of Rome was not present; which shews that Antichrist, i.e. that proud, aspiring, overweening Spirit was well grown, and arrived almost to its full stature. Πάσαι, saith my Author, i.e. now of a long time had the Bishoprick of Rome advanced its self more this ἐπαύριον, ἐπὶ τῇ δυναστείᾳ, beyond the Sacerdotal unto a Tyrannical Power, and therefore would not permit those who were of the same Orthodox Faith with them to meet and assemble quietly in their Jurisdiction. And this was written by *Socrates*, before the stile of Universal Bishop was yet thought of; which within a hundred years after was challenged, and then was the Mystery of Iniquity compleat and perfect.

4. The fourth and last thing in our Saviours Prediction, is the way how Antichrist should rise, together with the Progress he should make; They shall shew, saith our Saviour, great signs and wonders, to deceive, if it were possible, even the Elect. And this note either of pretending to, or really effecting of Miracles is mentioned both by the Apostle Paul, and John in his Revelation. Paul saith of him, that his working is according to Satan, in all power and signs, and τέρατα ψεύδους, not lying wonders in this sense, as if their Miracles were all forged and false, but τέρατα ἐρευνα ψεύδους, wonders done in defence and maintenance of a lye, i. e. His Doctrine should be so false, that it should have nothing to uphold it but merely the Reputation of Miracles, whether true or false. So the Apostle John saith, that the Beast, who had horns like a Lambe, doth great miracles, so that he makes even fire to descend from Heaven;

Socr. l. 5. c. 12.

Socr. l. 2. c. 24
& c. 17.

Socr. l. 7. c. 11.

2 Thes. 2. 9.

Rev. 13. 13.

Rev. 19. 20.

2 Pet. 2. 2.
R v 13.

2 Thes. 2. 10, 11

2 Thes. 2. 9.

V. Canones.
Concil. Trident.

what he there calls a *Beast*, in another place he calls, *the false Prophet who does signs and wonders*. So that our Saviour and his Apostles do both grant that Miracles may be done by a false Power; and likewise affirm, that whoever hath nothing else to alledge for his Religion, but meerly *Miracles*, that same is *Antichrist*. For Truth stands not in need of such outward Circumstances to underprop it; and, according to the Scripture, *Miracles* are not to prove the *Doctrine*, but the *Doctrine* is to prove the *Miracles*, whether they are from God or not. But yet, saith our Saviour, with those Arts and waies he shall so far prevail, as even almost to stagger the belief of the very *Elect*; *Mary shall follow their destructive Doctrines*, saith *Peter*; *the World shall wonder after the Beast*, saith *John*, and he shall deceive the *Inhabitants of the earth*, &c. all which places do note an almost Universal seduction. And if any ask, how it comes to pass that Corruption, so contrary to the received *Tenets* and *Maximes* of Christianity should be so generally embraced, the Apostle *Paul* hath given it, *Because men have not received the love of the Truth, that they might be saved, therefore shall God send upon them the strong working of deceit, that they should believe a Lye, i.e.* Men being unwilling to give themselves up to the guidance of Truth, which shines clearly by its own Light, both in Scriptures, and in their own Understandings; therefore shall God suffer them to be so brutish and Sortish, as to quit their Reason, and to be led up and down by any fond and ridiculous Errour, as those Impostors shall guide them.

I have done with the Prediction of our Saviour concerning *Antichrist*, and if upon your enquiry you find, that there is that Religion in the world which hath espoused and embodied into their Confession of Faith all the Opinions of *Antichrist*: If there be that Church in the world, which still pretends to do, and, for ought I know, doth *reall Miracles*, upon which they bottom their Plea to be the *true Church*; if they maintain *Persecution, Violence, and Fraud*; if they have dispirited and disenvigoured Religion by their worldly Pompe and Gallantry; and make thriving in this world a sign that God doth love and favour them, all which are *Antichristian* Tenets and Practices. If there be that Person in the world, who hath assumed the very stile of *Antichrist*, who hath trampled upon *Kings*, and trode upon the
Necks

Necks of *Emperours*; who in his *Canon Law* is called *God*; and, like God, doth dispense with all, both *Divine* and *Humane* Laws; then first, certainly *Antichrist* is already come; and to deny it, is to deny as great evidence and notoriety of fact, as to deny it is day when the Sun shineth. And secondly, He which foretold that *Antichrist* should thus come, with all these Circumstances that I have summed up, he was undoubtedly a *true Prophet, the true Messiah*; for to repeat the Argument in my Text; He told us these things before they came to pass, and we find that they are come to pass; and therefore he is.

The Use that I shall make of this whole Discourse is:

1. To convince the *Unresolved*.
2. To confirm those who are already settled.

The first use shall be to convince the *Unresolved*; I have already spoken something to awaken those that are resolute and peremptory *Unbelievers*; but there are many, who may be yet in their enquiring, doubting, and disputing state; who are not unwilling to embrace the Faith of *Christ*, but they find it to be so repugnant to every thing of natural Reason within them; and likely to be attended with so much hazard and danger, that they are either ashamed or afraid to own it, but yet are not fixed in positive denial of it, but through uncertainty they are alwaies *Anxious* and *wavering*. Such as these ought to be tenderly and gently dealt with; and two things I shall propose to them, which may help to alleviate and to abate their *Prejudices*.

Use 1.

1. That *Christian Religion* is in no part of it *unreasonable*; for, since the Proof of it in general depends upon the clearest Demonstration, viz. *The fulfilling of Prophecies*, then the belief of it must needs be rational. I know very well, that the things contained in the Scriptures, viz. *The Incarnation of the Son of God, three Persons of the Godhead, the Immediate Acting of the Holy Spirit upon the heart of Believers*, and the like, are all *Mysterious*, and no waies reconcileable to *Humane Apprehension*; but then we must consider, that these things are not proposed to our Understandings to comprehend them; but merely to our Faith to believe them; which where there is a firm and demonstrable ground

ground of *Beliefe* may be done, even to many things that we understand not. And the great hindrance that hath kept *Christian Faith* from entering into the minds of men, is want of attendance to that distinction, for many have both confounded themselves, and subverted the Faith of others by pressing upon them a comprehension of what is nowaies by us intelligible. And therefore all those *Disputes* about *Predestination, Trinity, Resurrection, Incarnation*, and the like, are for the greatest part of them unprofitable and dangerous; because they are not content barely to assert the Truth, (which is then best done when it is put into the plainest and most unscholastick Language of Scripture) but our Arguers do over and above enquire *de modo*, and labour to give reasons for those stupendous and amazing Mysteries, which the Apostle Paul cries out *ὦ βάθος* upon, and, for the most part, ends the Dispute with a Reproof of the Disputer. And therefore such of you as are not yet fixed in your belief; set your selves purely upon this Article, viz. *to enquire whether Jesus be the Christ*; and never give it over till it hath pleased God fully to confirm you in it. And my Reasons for this Advice are these three.

1. Because this is the most effectual and ready way to prove unto you the *Divine Authority of the Scriptures*. Those who set upon this work by endeavouring to prove the *Scriptures* to be the *Word of God*, as they lye in gross, and in their diffused Bulk, proceeding by *Chapter* and *Verses*, do undertake a Tedious and Impossible Task; for there those ordinary and trivial Objections of *mistakes*, and *variations in Copies, mistranslations*, and the like, are never to be assailed; but if you draw the several lines in Scripture into their Center, and contract them into Christ, as you use to do the Sun-beams into a burning-glass, then do they cast a quick and vigorous lustre, sufficient to enlighten and warm even the most stiffe and rigid Opposer. He that would demonstrate the *Providence of God*, would not, I suppose, begin with the *Minnia mundi*, the lesser things of the World, as Flies and Insects, but he would fix, as *David* doth, upon the Sun, or some noble and conspicuous part, whose Use is undeniable; and thence conclude, that if Providence hath a respect to any one part of the world, it cannot be imagined but it should have an Influence over all; for else it must either be Finite or Partial, which is absurd. So in the asserting

asserting of Scriptures, begin with that which they all point at, and which if one place be questioned, thousands of the same kind will evince, *viz.* That *the Messiah was to come*, which is the great design of the Old Testament. That *the Messiah is come*, which is the sum of the New ; and then all the other parts of Scripture will be owned, as suited to the Divine and Heavenly Nature of our *Messiah* ; who took a body, not only that he might dye our Price, but that he might live our Pattern. And almost each Line of Scripture, especially in the New Testament, describes either his Life, or his Language.

2. Here the Doubter must begin, because this is the readiest way to ascertain himself whether he be guided by *the Spirit of God*, or not. So the Apostle *Paul*, *None can call Jesus the Lord but by the Holy Spirit* ; and *John*, *Every Spirit that confesseth Jesus the Messiah to be come in the flesh, is of God*. They do not mean, that saying this in words is a sign of the *Spirit*, for what is more easie ? but the owning it in heart, this whoever doth, may be sure he hath the *Spirit*. And the reason is plain, because where the Object proposed doth exceed any natural power, there must be a new power given, by which that Object is to be received. Thus the Apostle *John* argues concerning *future glory*, *Hereafter*, *saith he, we shall be like him, i. e. Christ, because we shall see him as he is*. There will be a proportion and similitude between Christs body and ours, because our visive Faculty shall be so exceedingly advanced, as that we shall be able to perceive him in his utmost radiance of Glory. So in belief, since the soul when it doth it, is heightened beyond any native Virtue of its own, it is a sign that Gods Spirit hath illuminated and enlarged its Capacity. Thus the Apostle, *We are saved by Grace through Faith*, *and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God ; i. e. that very Faith, by which we apprehend Christ, is as much the gift of God as Christ himself that is apprehended by it*. I know very well this seems harsh to many who are willing to boast in themselves ; but if ever you come to believe indeed, you will find the Difficulties, your Natural Reason doth urge and vex you with, to be insuperable, untill the Spirit of God, by infusing new light, doth explain and solve them.

Lastly, Begin with enquiring whether *Jesus* be the *Christ*, because

because upon this depends the whole course of your future Obedience. Our Saviour required no more of any that came unto him, but *to believe that he was the Son of God*; not that he did exclude good works, but he knew that this was the only way to facilitate and expedite them. All the while we are either uncertain that our past sins are pardoned, or our present services accepted; how lamely, how untowardly do we set about our duty? But when once we believe on *Christ* all that care is over, and the firmer our Faith is, the higher and more ardent will our Love be; which, like a flame, shoots through the soul, and carries it out with an heavenly quickness and ardency. Therefore, saith the

Rom. 10. 9, 10. *Apottle, If thou confests with thy mouth, that Jesus is the Lord, i.e. If thou obeyest him) and believest in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, (i.e. that he is the true Messiah, of which his Resurrection is an infallible proof,) thou shalt be saved. For with the heart men believe unto righteousness; (i.e. unto the justification of their Persons,) and with the mouth is confession made unto Salvation. But to think of making confession, or doing any act of Religion, without Faith (desire at least, and the desire of Faith is Faith) this is only to mock God, and to undo our selves by our foolish and hypocritical presumptions, in presenting unto him a Sacrifice which he abhors; For without Faith, i.e. reliance upon him for mercy, and out of Christ, God is nothing else but Justice, it is impossible to please him.*

When the Doubter hath gone thus far, as to find that if he will be satisfied, here he must begin; his next course will be to run over in his mind those Arguments which our Saviour useth to evince his being the *Messiah*; such are the *heavenliness of his Language*; *Why do you not*, saith our Saviour, *know my speech?* i.e. Why do you not perceive, even by my manner of discourse that I am come from heaven, full of that God in whose Name I speak? For, as some of the Jews said, *these are not the words of him that hath a devil*: These are not the words of one that came to deceive the world, and to boast of himself to be that which he was not. Another Argument our Saviour urges, is the holiness of his Life; *Which of you*, saith he, *doth convince me of sin?* and *many good works have I done amongst you, for which of them do you stone me?* An holy, humble, self-denying man, who forbade even his

Joh. 8. 43.

Joh. 10. 21.

Joh. 8. 46.

Joh. 10. 32.

his Miracles to be published, cannot, without intolerable malice, be supposed to assume a title which did not belong to him. Add to this the God-like Patience and Resolution of his Death, dying in defence of this very Tenet; unprovoked with injuries, breathing out his soul in charity to men, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do*; at the same time both praying and pleading for his bitterest Enemies; and then giving up himself unto his Father with perfect Affiance, *Father, into thy hands do I commend my Spirit*. Add yet farther, the Testimony of his Followers, who saw him after he was risen; the success of his Doctrine in spite of Persecution; and above all, the fulfilling of Prophecies, as I have already mentioned; Truly then if he that doubted be not satisfied; if he that was almost, doth not become altogether a Christian, he is strangely wanting to himself, for God is not wanting to assist those who do but begin to enquire after him: every doubt that ariseth being nothing else but a Motion of Gods Spirit, whereby he would draw us unto himself.

Luk. 23. 34.

Ibid. v. 46.

Having thus cleared, that to believe is not unreasonable, as the Unbeliever supposeth; the next thing I shall propose is this: That

2. To obey is not dangerous; for though we may lose our Lives, yet sure we shall be sufficient gainers if we save our souls. And therefore let the Doubter strengthen himself with representing Heaven in its fulness of Joy alwaies before his eyes. That Doctrine which teacheth, that we are not to have an eye to the recompence of reward, it is false and dangerous; It is false, because it contradicts the Command and the Example of Christ, who for the joy that was set before him despised the Cross. Thus Moses, thus Paul did both eye the Reward themselves, and enjoyn it as a duty upon others. 2. It is dangerous, first, because it begets infinite scruples, especially in young Converts, whose first inducement must either be from their hopes, or their Feares, and which way soever they begin they have our Saviour sometime using Threats, otherwhiles mingling Promises, to justify their being wrought upon by either. 2. It makes the greatest and most comfortable part of the Word useles, and that is the Promises; and if men may live above the Promises, it will quickly follow, that they may live above the Precepts too; and what

Heb 11. 2.

the end of such Doctrine may be, is too apparent. I say therefore to the yet Doubting Christian, fetch new strength & vigour from the Promises; for if thy Belief be Reasonable, I am sure thy Obedience, though it brings suffering, is highly so; for no momentary pressure, how grievous soever, can countervail that full and everlasting weight of happiness which is laid up for Believers and Obeyers of the Gospel. And that is a Theme so obvious, that I need not insist upon it.

So much for the first Use.

Use 2. The second Use is to confirm and strengthen Believers: *He that standeth*, saith the Apostle, and Faith only is the cause of a Christians standing, *let him take heed lest he fall*; And take heed, saith he to the believing Hebrews, *lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, to Apostatize from the living God*. Nothing doth undo the greatest part of Christians, but their Confidence; whereby, presuming upon their present stock of Faith, they lay in no fresh recruits, and so fall, if not finally, (for that no *elect Person* can do) yet foully, as *Peter* did: whose security betrayed him into that which cost him many bitter Tears. This kind of *Bread* is to be begged and received new every day from Heaven, or else we have no certainty that it will continue with us one moment. And therefore whatever we do, let us take care that *our Faith fail not*; a breach there, is like a wound in the head, for the most part mortall; and if at any time there have been Ruptures and Intercisions made in that Grace, repair them presently by quickning and feeding your Faith with new Arguments; New, if not for Subject and Matter, yet for Light and for Discovery. Now this often reflecting upon our Saviours Prediction, is the best expedient you can provide: For that was it which confirmed the Apostles, who were of as slow, incredulous, and uneasy a temper to believe as any of us can be; when our Saviour had told the Jews, that *in three daies he would destroy the Temple and raise it up again*, meaning the Temple of his Body; The Evangelist *John* observes, That *when he was raised from the dead, his Disciples remembered, that he had said this unto them; and, he adds, they believed the Scripture*, (which foretold this of the *Messiah*) *and the word which Jesus had said*; (who foretold it of himself,) where he makes our Saviours foretelling his own *Resurrection* to be

2 Cor. 4. 17.

1 Cor. 10. 12.

Heb. 3. 12.

Joh. 2. 22.

be a *medium* by which the Disciples did strengthen their Faith, even after they had seen him risen. And when they ran to the Sepulchre in the midst of their Despairs and Fears, as now imagining that their Master was utterly gone, and all their Faith ungrounded; the Angels tell them, *Remember, say they, how he spake unto you, while he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and be raised again the third day.* And, saies the Evangelist, *they remembered his words; i.e.* Reflecting upon them, which their present sorrow and impatience made them to forget, they did a little moderate and appease their sorrow. By the example then of those Apostles, often mind your selves of our Saviours Predictions, and they will be of great advantage and comfort to you in these three Cases:

- I. In case of *Heresies*, which are already come.
- II. In case of *Persecution*, which may come.
- III. In case of *Future Glory*, which though it be now delayed, yet we have a promise that it will come.

I. The reflecting upon our Saviours Predictions will be of great use to comfort Believers, in respect of the *Heresies* which already are come; I know it is a sad and troublesome thing unto a true Christian to see the Divisions and Contentions of *Brethren*; to have the *Peace* of the Church disturbed by *Schisme*, and the Uniry of Faith divided by *Error*; but as our Saviour said to his Disciples concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, *When you see Wars, and Tumults, be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass.* So say I, when you see *Heresie* and *Error* spreading it self, and Parties, and sittings, under pretence of advancing Truth, miscalling *Faction* by the name of Religion; be not amazed, for we know who hath told us, That *there must be Heresies,* that *οἱ δοκῶντες*, those whose Faith is approved or tried may be made manifest. As mists and vapours serve to set out the Sun, so do Errours in some make the Truth that is owned by others more conspicuous and apparent. I know the common cry of Ignorant or self-designing men, is *Put down Preaching, keep the People from reading the Scriptures, &c.* which is all one as if they should say,

Pull down the Sun, that we may prevent the rising of Clouds and Meteors; The Scripture is like the Sun, and where it shines vigorously, the dull Earth, *i.e.* Natural Ignorance in men, which conceives and apprehends it not, must needs send forth mists and vapours. But, God forbid that the *Children* should be deprived of their *Bread*, because the *Dogs* are ready to snatch it from them, and abuse it. To Imprison the Scripture in a dark and unknown Language, is indeed the ready way to prevent Heresies, for what people cannot know they will be sure not to contend about: So to extinguish the Sun, is the ready way to hinder Clouds, but then we shall be encompassed with the Horror of Eternal Night: And to put out the Candle, that so all colours may agree in the dark, is a device as Politick as the devil himself that invented it, whose kingdom cannot subsist, unless the World do lull themselves asleep into a dull, stupid, irremediable Ignorance. When the *Light* of the *Scripture* is gone, I am afraid the *Light* of the *Spirit* will go with it; And I am sure the *Light* of *Reason* leads us to nothing, but to *Atheism*, or to worse, to *foolish* and *impertinent superstition*; *i.e.* it makes us either so cunning, as to deceive others; or so foolish, as to be willing to be deceived our selves. Therefore instead of such dismal contrivances, let *Heresies* be suppressed by the same way by which they were raised, and that is by *Preaching*; and in the mean while, let not the Believer be troubled that many Errours are commonly vented now, for he understood not the Nature of his Religion, nor the vain-glorious and yet foolish Pride of man, if he did not expect them. For the Scripture is difficult; exceeding difficult and hard to be understood; and man is foolish, and so apt to mistake; Proud, and so apt to presume; Vain-glorious, and so apt to publish his Conceits; which in the end prove *Heresies*. But convince men once that it is their duty to be Humble, then they will cease to vent; that they are to be charitable, and they will forbear to contend for their singular Fancies; and unto this Posture of mind nothing but the blessing of God upon Preaching can bring them.

2. This likewise will comfort Believers in respect of *Persecutions* which may come. That the Church of Christ is a Ship which doth best in a Storm, and that Faith must, like Gold, be tried

tried in the Fire, is so known a thing that I need not insist upon it. All that I infer is, that the having Afflictions foretold should keep us from grieving at them when they do come. *They, saith our Saviour to his Disciples, shall put you out of the Synagogues, and when they kill you, think they do God good service: And I tell you these things, that you might not be offended, but remember that I told you of them.* Thus the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, *Let no man be moved by his Afflictions, for ye know that we are appointed unto this; And even when we were with you, we told you before that we should be afflicted, even as also it is come to pass.* Those who are forewarned of approaching Evils, are usually armed against them: And therefore I have often wondered at that timid and abject Spirit which is in many under their Afflictions; which is a certain sign that their *Fear* is above their *Faith*, and that they inwardly distrust their *Cause*, or doubt of their *Reward*. *If ye are reproached, saith the Apostle Peter, for the sake of Christ, happy are ye, for the Spirit of Glory and of God rests upon you.* And Paul to Timothy, *We have not received the Spirit of Fear, but the Spirit of Power, therefore be not ashamed of the Testimony of Christ.* So that I conceive no condition is more joyous to a true Christian, than to be endued with courage to suffer; for as in Winter the Fire doth redouble its heat, so God at that time of trial doth pour into the soul a more abundant supply of Comfort. However he that suffers is on the surer side. For though one may suffer, and yet not be in the Right, yet he that persecutes is certainly in the wrong, as doing a thing which he hath no warrant for. So that as the Apostle Peter adviseth, *Let them who suffer according unto the Will of God, not be solicitous about the Event, but go on in their Duty, though the World frown, and commit their souls unto him, in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

3. Lastly, The reflecting upon our Saviours Predictions, and the fulfilling of them, will be a great Comfort unto Believers, in respect of *Future Glory*, which is yet delayed, but will certainly come. I make no doubt, but every serious resolved Christian doth often wish with the Apostle Paul, *To be dissolved, and to be with Christ*; which certainly is a condition much better than to struggle with the difficulties and uncertainties of Life, or to be clogged with a decaying, sinful, and enticing body of Flesh.

Joh. 16. 1.

1 Thes. 3. 3, 4.

2 Pet. 4. 14.

2 Tim. 1. 7, 8.

1 Pet. 4. 19.

Phil. 2.

We.

2 Cor. 5.

Heb. 10. 23.

Ib. v. 36, 37.

2 Pet. 3.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

Ibid. v. 18.

We that are in this Tabernacle, saith the Apostle, do grow being burdened; we would fain be stripped and disrobed of this Clog of Flesh, and be put into present possession of our Inheritance. But as Heirs must wait patiently, ἀναυτὶς ἀποθεσίου; untill the time appointed by their Father, so must we. Let us hold fast, saith the Apostle, the Profession of our Faith without wavering, for he is faithful that hath promised; i.e. God will be as good as his word, and he hath shewn it, by fulfilling so many things already. So that, as he adds, Ye have need of Patience, that when we have finished the will of God, we may receive the Promise, For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry. Life it self is but of a very short date, stretched out to its utmost span; but what a nothing is it, if compared to Eternity? And cannot we wait some few years to do our Masters business on Earth, but we must cry out for our wages before we have done our work? And because Unbelief is ready to creep in, and to make that Objection which some in Peter do, Where is the Promise of his coming? Why doth Christ seem to neglect his Church, as if he had no regard unto his Vineyard? If these thoughts arise, as do what we can, come they will, silence them with that of Peter, God is not slack concerning his Promise, as some men count slackness, but he is long-suffering towards us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto the knowledge of the truth. God hath yet some Jewels to gather out of the Worlds Rubbish, and it is for their sakes that the present frame of things is so long continued; for when their Number is accomplished, the Heaven shall be wrapped up, as a Scroull, and the Earth shall be removed as a uselefs Scene. Wherefore, that I may conclude in the Apostle Peters words, Believers, Ye knowing these things before, beware that ye be not led away by the seduction of ungodly men, and so fall from your own steadfastness; but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To whom be glory now and for ever.

A M E N.

The



The Resurrection of the Body Asserted and Cleared.

ACT. 16. 8.

Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead ?



These are the words of the Apostle *Paul*, spoken by way of Apology, in defence of himself, and of that most questioned and contradicted part of his Doctrine, *viz. the Resurrection of the Dead*. This being in it self, & so accounted by him, the chief Foundation of a Christians Hope, where ever that great Apostle came, he first laies, and then builds upon it. At *Athens*, among the learned Greeks, we find ACT. 17. 18. him, by their own confession, preaching but two things, *Jesus*, and the *Resurrection*. Afterwards, when he was empleaded by the Jews, he doth openly avow his Faith. *I am*, saith he, a *Pharisee* ; i. e. I do with them hold and maintain the Resurrection of ACT. 23. 6. the dead, for, as it follows, *of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question*. Again, when he was convened before *Felix*, the Roman Deputy, he insists upon the same Argument ;
for

A^ct. 24. 5.

Ver. 14.

Ver. 15.

for whereas he was charged by *Tertullus* with being an *Heretick* (which word is still continued, as that name of Obloquy, whereby men are wont to disgrace all new Discoveries of old Truths) *Paul* doth, in despite of that opprobrious Name, own that, which they called *Heresie*, and aloud proclaimes, that *he believed*, as all the Jews either did, or else had reason to do from their writings, *there should be a Resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust*. And now again, being brought forth before a mixt Auditory, both of *Jews* and *Romans*, he doth not only assert the Doctrine, but likewise in these words offers to dispute the Case, and to prove the *Resurrection* by the dint of Reason.

The words themselves, which are proposed by way of question, contain three parts :

1. A Proposition : that *God will raise the Dead* ; for these words, *Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead ?* Imply, that God will certainly raise them.

2. An Opposition : that this is judged very incredible ; for these words, *Why is it judged incredible with you, that God should raise the Dead ?* Implies, that this is ordinarily esteemed and reputed as a thing incredible.

3. A Demonstration or a Conviction ; that though this was judged incredible, yet indeed in it self it was not so. For this question, *Why is it judged incredible, &c.* implies, that in the opinion of the Questioner, there was no sufficient Reason why it should be so esteemed.

And these three Parts afford us three Doctrinal Conclusions :

1. That God will raise the Dead.

2. That this Doctrine, concerning the Resurrection of the Dead, seems to natural men very incredible and very unreasonable.

3. That the Resurrection of the Dead, however it be judged incredible by natural men, yet is in it self highly credible, highly rational.

Doct. 1.

The first Conclusion is, That God will raise the Dead ; By *Dead*, here I mean that part of man which dies, *viz.* his Body ; for the soul dies not, but when the body returns to its dust, *the soul*

returns to him that gave it. And fear not them, saith our Saviour, Eccl. 12. 7. which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; with this part of Mat. 10. 28. our selves, as soon as ever we dislodge from the Body, in the Apostle Pauls Language, we do *ἡμεῖς ἀναστρέφεται πρὸς τὸν κύριον*, i.e. dwell 1 Cor. 5. 8. and cohabite with the Lord, as in our proper Fathers house; for Heaven is the Souls Native and Original home: and therefore the re-union of that at last with the Body, is rather a return than a Resurrection. To speak properly, the Body only rises; thus our Saviour: *The hour is coming*, saith he, *when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they who hear, shall live*; where, that we might not be mistaken, who he meant by dead, he adds by way of Explication, *the hour is coming, when all who are, ἐν τοῖς μνημείοις*, in the Tombs or Monuments, shall hear his voice. Now what else are Monuments but as one calls them, *Cadaverum stabula*; The stalls or receptacles of our corrupt and perishing bodies. And therefore, when our Saviour invites all to come unto him, he uses this by way of motive, that whoever came to him, he would not lose *ἐξ αὐτοῦ*, i.e. any thing that belonged to him, For, saith he, 1 Joh. 6. 39. *I will raise him up at the last day. And again, He that believes on the Son, he shall have Eternal Life, and I will raise him up at the last day.* Implying, not only that if the body were not raised, something which did essentially belong to man would be lost and perish; but likewise that without this raising of the body, Eternal Life would not be a state of happiness; because it would be nothing else but an Eternal separation from that part unto which the soul alwaies desires to be joyned, and from which it is unwillingly severed, as the Apostle argues, 1 Cor. 5. 1. and following verses.

But doth our Saviour, do his Apostles say this only? Say not the Prophets the same? Is not this Article of our Faith, as well as all the rest, to be proved out of the Old Testament? It will concern us a little to enquire into it, that we may stop those mens mouths, who traduce our Religion; when they tell us, that it is wholly new; for if our Saviour had taught any thing which was either contrary to, or not eminently contained in the Writings of Moses and the Prophets, the Jews would have had juster Reason to disbelieve his Doctrine than as yet they can pretend. For to insist only upon this of the Resurrection (which of all other Divine Discoveries seems to have least footing in the Old Testament.) It is plain that the Sadduces, who denied the Resur-

rection, are charged by our Saviour with Ignorance of the Scriptures, *Ye erre, saith he, not knowing the Scriptures; i. e. not reflecting upon those places of Scripture wherein the Resurrection is, though not directly spoken of, yet, plainly and by good consequence implied.* And thereupon he interprets one place, which, though not minded by them, yet, did verifie his Assertion. The Place is, that stile which God, in his Apparition to *Moses*, did assume, when he calls himself, *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; this, saith our Saviour, doth demonstrate the Resurrection, *For God is not God of the dead, but of the living*; which words conclude two things: 1. That the souls of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob* were then living with God. 2. That the living of their souls did necessarily infer that their bodies should live too; since God is not God of this or that part only, but of the whole man. Another place in the Old Testament which did imply the Resurrection, is the promise God made to *Abraham*; that *he would bring him to a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.* But by this Land, as the Apostle excellently argues, was not meant *Canaan*, for there *Abraham* had no possession, but confessed of himself that he was a *Pilgrim and stranger in it*; which manifestly shews, that he desired a Country, not that which he left, but a better, even a heavenly one; and that he looked after it, as a Place of Happiness not only for his Soul, but likewise for his Body, is plain from what the Apostle saith afterwards, concerning the undaunted Constancy of the *Primitive Martyrs, i. e.* such as died in bearing their witness for the Truths of God, before the coming of our Saviour in the flesh. *They would not, saith he, accept of deliverance, that they might obtain a better Resurrection.* Besides these places which do imply this Doctrine, there are some that do expressly mention it; As that of *Job*, whose words, however controverted by many Learned men, yet out of the Original, are exactly thus, *For I know that my Redeemer (i. e. promised Messiah, unto whom this Term of רִמְיָהוּ is most ordinarily applied, as Isa. 59. 20. רִמְיָהוּ, i. e. the Redeemer shall come to Sion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, which no Interpreter but must needs understand of the promised Saviour) liveth, and at last he shall arise (or stand, i. e. as Judge) over the Dust, (i. e. either upon Earth, as our English Translation*

Exod 3.

Mat. 22 31, 32.

Gen. 12. 1.

Heb. 11. 8, 16.

Ver. 35.

Job 19.

Ver. 25.

Translation hath it ; or, *over all men, though now for the present they lye in the dust.*) And, *after my skin, when they (i.e. the worms, Ver. 16. or the diseases he was then afflicted with) have pierced through this (i.e. body of mine) yet out of my flesh shall I see Jehovah, whom I shall see for my self, and my eyes shall behold, and not a stranger* Ver. 27. ; which doth so clearly manifest his belief of the Resurrection, that, as the words cannot possibly be made sense without it, so the Greek Translation, by using the word *Ανασταναι*, which signifies, *To raise up again to life*, in that sense I speak of, doth plainly favour it. This likewise was the Faith of *David*, where he saies, *Thou wilt not suffer thy Holy one to see Corruption* : For though (as Psal. 16. 11. to the Rising on the third day, i.e. before the natural Humours Act. 3. were resolved and Corrupted) it was literally fulfilled by our Saviour, and so applied to him both by *Peter* and *Paul*, yet it is plain, that he who spake those words did likewise believe a Resurrection of his own Person, therefore he saies, *My flesh shall rest in hope*. But most plain is that of *Daniel*, who, speaking of *Michael*, i.e. *Messiah the Prince*, (and we know it was the Charge against our Saviour, that he made himself *Χριστὸν βασιλέα*, i.e. *Messiah the Prince*) saies, that in his time, *Many* (i.e. the multitude) *of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt* ; which is so clear a Prophecy of the Future Resurrection, and in so expresse Terms, that our Saviour in his Declaration of it seems to allude to these very words of *Daniel*, and to have had them in his eye ; only what *Daniel* calls *everlasting contempt*, our Saviour explains, by calling it, *the Resurrection of Condemnation* : And these, saith he, *who do good, shall go forth to the Resurrection of life ; but those who do evil, to the Resurrection of Condemnation*. So that from hence it evidently appears, that we Christians, in this particular, do own no more than what other holy men among the Jews did before us ; and our Apostle did very well understand what he said, when in the words foregoing my Text, he tells them, that *he was then judged for the Promise* (i.e. of Future life and happiness not to be attained, but after the Resurrection) *made by God unto the Fathers* ; whereupon he proceeds to make that query, *Why should it be judged incredible, that God should raise the dead?*

And so much for the first Observation.

Doct. 2.

Act. 17. 18.

Act. 16. 23, 24.

πνευματι.

2 Cor. 15.

Ver. 35.

Joh. 3. 9.

Enschel. 5. c. 1.

c. 7. 9.

c. 14. 7.

The second Observation is this, That the Doctrine of the Resurrection, though plainly revealed in Scripture, seems to natural men very incredible; so it appeared to the Learned Philosophers at Athens, who called Paul *ωρεμολόγον, Prater, or Trifler* for preaching it: And they did so little understand what the word *Ανδρασις* meant, that they took it to be the name of some *Demon*; for thus some said of Paul, *That he was a publisher of strange Demons, because he preached unto them Jesus and the Resurrection*; which last word should have been left untranslated, for they took *Ανδρασις*, which Paul spake so much of, to be the name of some *New Goddess*. So likewise in this Chapter, when Paul makes a Relation of his Conversion, which yet was very miraculous, *Festus* heard him patiently, but when once he began to mention how Christ was raised from the dead, *Festus* could hold no longer, but cried out with a great deal of impatience, *Paul thou art mad, too much learning hath quite unhinged thy brain, and overturned thee into madness*. Hence the Apostle, in that Chapter where he doth most elegantly dispute it, brings in an heathen asking this question, *But some man will say, How are the dead raised up?* Which is not an *How* of enquiry, into the manner and Method of the Resurrection, in what order it shall be accomplished; but an *How* of doubting, concerning the whole thing: Like *Nicodemus's* *How, How can these things be?* And therefore in the Primitive Persecutions, the enemies of Gods People never shewed more wirty cruelty in any thing than in devising waies how to elude the Resurrection; and that not only by mangling, torturing, and burning their bodies, but by scattering their Ashes in the Rivers, *ὡς συρόμενοι*, saith mine Author, *νικῶσαι τὸν θεόν, καὶ ἀρῆσθαι αὐτῶν τὴν παλιγγενεσιαν, &c.* As if they had been able to conquer God, and deprive the Saints of their Resurrection. Neither was this only the perswasion of the Heathen world, but we see oftentimes in Scripture, those who owned higher Principles, yet manifesting their doubts and despair of this. Thus *Job*, notwithstanding his so excellent confession, in a fit of impatience cries out, As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. And again, *There is hope*, saith he, of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.

But

But, if a man dye, shall he live again? By which words he seems to conclude, that by death at least the Body is utterly lost. So *Ezekiel*, when God, to try his faith, asked him this question, *Son of man, can these bones live?* That holy man durst not affirm it, but uses an answer which shews that he was altogether uncertain and at a loss about it: *O Lord God, saith he, thou knowest; i.e.* I am not able to resolve thee; that *dry bones should live*, belongs as much to a Divine knowledge to comprehend, as to a Divine Power to effect it. Thus in the New Testament the Apostles, though they knew their Master to be the *Son of God*, and *the Messiah*, (which was a great master-piece of Faith) yet they did not at all understand the *Resurrection*; for when our Saviour after his Transfiguration did charge them, that they should not tell any what they had seen, untill the Son of man were risen from the dead; The Evangelist adds, that they kept the matter private to themselves, but questioned or disputed with one another, *what the rising from the dead should mean*: at which time, it seems, they were so utterly ignorant of the thing, that they scarce understood the meaning of the word. Hence was it, that even then when the Resurrection of our Saviour had cleared the Point, and left scarce room for the least umbrage of suspicion to enter; yet there were some in the Church of *Corinth*, who utterly denied it; and other, of the *Seet of Hymenæus and Phileas*, who affirmed, *that it was past already*; So hard a matter was it for this Doctrine to get ground in the world; and therefore the Apostle when he sums up the *Mystery of Godliness*, i.e. as it is revealed by our Saviour, he makes this to be one great part of it, that *Christ was not only risen from the dead, but believed on in the world*. The subduing of the world unto the persuasion and credence of our Saviours Resurrection being every whit as miraculous as the raising him.

The Reasons why this appears so to incredible, to natural men, are

1. Because naturally men do doubt the Immortality of the Soul. I know very well, that there are many excellent Discourses about this in the Heathen Writers; and *Plato*, in a certain Dialogue of his, brings in his Master *Socrates*, disputing about it, with as much strength of Reason, and clearness of Expression, as the

Ver. 14.

c. 37. 3.

Mar. 9.

1 Cor. 15. 12.

2 Tim. 2. 18.

1 Tim. 13. 6.

Phado.

the wit of man can possibly invent ; but after all his fine sayings he concludes, *καὶ ἐπεὶ ἐν ταύταις ἀγγελιαῖς οὐκ ἔστιν ἀνθρώπου ἀποφασίζοντος τοῦ ἔχοντος αἰδέσθαι*; But expressly to affirm, that the matter is indeed so, as I have discoursed of, doth by no means become an understanding man. And so makes it at the best only a probable opinion, without daring to think, as our modern Demonstrators do, that he had fully and satisfactorily cleared it. And therefore his so much magnified *Socrates*, when he was now to be led unto execution, takes his farewell of the Judges in these words, which discover nothing but his uncertainty, *Ἰγὼ τοῦ θνῆσθαι καὶ ζῆναι, καὶ ποῦ ποταμὸν ἵκωμαι, οὐδὲν ἄλλω ἢ τῷ θεῷ, οὐδὲν ἄλλω ἢ τῷ θεῷ*. So *Tully*, the most Learned of the Romans, calls *Immortality an Error*, which he will by no means part with, because he is pleased and delighted with it. Wherein he discovers his *Wishes*, rather than his *Hopes* ; For as *Tertullian* excellently argues, to suppose the soul Immortal, it was in the Heathen nothing else but a bold and vain presumption, since it alwaies lay in his power to destroy the Soule, who made it ; and whether he would or not, he had not, as to them, revealed his pleasure. And indeed the words of *Job* in his despair are the highest reasoning of most Philosophers, *Man*, saith he, *dieth, and wasteth away ; yea, man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he ?* And *Solomon*, in the person of a natural man, asks a question, which he challengeth the World to answer, *Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of a beast that goeth downward to the Earth ? Who knoweth ?* i.e. upon the principles of meer Reason, and Research of Natural Causes, who is able to resolve it ? Whereupon among the Jews, the *Sadduces*, who denied the Resurrection, denied likewise both *Angel and Spirit*, i.e. the surviving of the soul, as well as the restoring of the body. So that since men do naturally doubt of the less, it is no wonder if they despair of the greater ? They who are apt to give the soul it self for lost, how can they imagine that the body should ever be recovered ?

2. The second Reason, why natural men are so apt to disbelieve the Resurrection, is, because they make a wrong estimate of *Gods Power*. We see in this World nothing better, and therefore we are ready to measure God by our selves ; and believe no more of his Power than what falls within the compass of *Human*

Apol.

De Senect.

De Anim.

c. 14. 10.

Ecl. 3. 21.

Act 23. 8.

mane probability ; which is the true and fixed ground of all that Atheistical Distrust, which in all times doth so much abound among men : *Who is the Lord*, said Pharaoh, *that I should let Israel go ?* And, *Who is Jehovah*, saies Insulting Senacherib, *that he should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand ?* Nay, not only these wicked men, but the Saints of old have most stumbled, when they have been put to A&t Faith upon Gods Omnipotency ; Thus Sarah when she heard the promise of a Son, *she laughed*, *What*, saith she, *now I am old shall I have pleasure, my Husband being old also ?* Wherein she musters up Arguments to make her Distrust seem Rational. So Moses finds out many excuses to avoid being sent upon Gods Errand, *I am not Eloquent*, saith he, *but slow of speech, and slow of Tongue* ; And at last, in plain terms, he entreats that God would find out a fitter Messenger to go upon his Embassy, And whence did this proceed, but from his distrust of Gods Power to Qualifie him first, and to Protect him afterwards ? Thus David, Jeremy, Zachary, nay, almost all, when a stress or difficulty hath been laid upon their Faith, they have been ready to cry out, *with Nicodemus, How can these things be ?* Thus it fares in the Case of the Resurrection ; Men do first confine the Omnipotence of God to their own Notions, and then deny what otherwise they would never have doubted of. Our Saviour therefore tells the unbelieving and gainsaying Sadducees, *Ye erre, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the Power of God ; not knowing the Scriptures, which declare the Resurrection ; nor the Power of God, which is able to effect it.*

3. The third Reason of this Unbelief is, because Natural men are guided only by sensible Impressions ; what they see, what they believe, and are not, without a great deal of difficulty, carried one jot farther. Hence were the Jews so importunate with our Saviour to shew them a *sign from Heaven* ; And when our Saviour told some of his Followers, in answer to their Demand, that it was *the work of God*, (i.e. well-pleasing to, and required by him) *to believe on him, whom he had sent*. They presently reply upon him, *What sign shewst thou then, that we may see and believe thee ?* So those Scoffers in Isaiah, when the Prophet had denounced terrible things against them, *Let him make speed, say they, and hasten his work, that we may see it.* That is, you speak much

much to us of what shall come hereafter, but we see no danger near, and therefore we will not believe you. Thus those wretched Pharisees, when they had nailed our Saviour to the Cross, *Let him now, say they, come down from the Cross, and we will believe him.* Vain men as well as Cruel! Vain, in that they conceived it lay in their own Power to believe when they pleased; Cruel, in that they did insult over a man, whom they had so inhumanely murdered: Both Vain and Cruel, in that they could imagine our Saviour, after the Miracles of his Life, and more than miraculous Patience of his Death, fruitlessly shewn amongst them, would now descend at last meerly to satisfy their Impious Curiosity. We are all of the Tormented Persons mind; though Preaching can do no good upon us, yet we think, if one came from the dead and taught us, we should then certainly be converted; But our Saviour hath resolved the Case clean otherwise, *If they, saith he, hear not Moses and the Prophets (who speak in the Name of God with that Authority, as becomes his Power; and with that Purity, as becomes his Holiness; if these men, thus speaking, be not listened to) neither will men be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.* So that our Saviour (who best understood all the Topicks and Methods of Perswasion) hath left it as an Eternal and Experienced Truth, That no *Miracle* can convince them whom the *Word* will not work upon; that Illustrations of Faith are infinitely more satisfying than Impressions from sense; since the one perish presently, and decay by using, but the other soak into the soul, and grow up into a kind of Connaturalness with it, moulding and fashioning the mind unto their own temper, and every day adds fresh life and vigour to them. But a Natural man going not further than his Eye of natural Reason can carry him; having never seen any thing like to the Resurrection, no wonder if he doth not believe it.

4. The last and true Reason, why Natural men do not believe the Resurrection of the dead, is, because they are unwilling to believe it. It is harsh and severe Doctrine; It laies the Axe to the Root of the Tree of Self, and cuts off all our Fantastick Enjoyments; It is the Fan that blows away our Husky and Chaffie Pleasures, and leaves us to fix upon nothing, but a solid and substantial Good. And therefore when one comes, and presses this closely

closely upon us, we are ready to cry out, as the woman, when she had lost her Son, did to the Prophet, *What have we to do with thee, O thou man of God, art thou come to call our sins to remembrance, and to slay our Son, i.e.* To kill and destroy our Pleasures, which are the Darlings of our Soul? Hence it is, that either we fortifie our selves with Objections against the Resurrection, as the Heathen world did, and take a great deal of pains to strengthen our Unbelief; or else, like *Felix*, we run away from the sound of it, for fear it should put us into a fit of trembling. Should a man come and preach, as some among the Jews did, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye*; such an one as we should welcome into our house, and thank him for his Poyson. But let them call to us to *repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand*; they will fare as *John* and our Saviour did; though they may scape with their Lives, yet they shall not escape our Censure. Let a *Paul* teach us, that *now God commandeth all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.* This Doctrine so sober in it self, of so great concernment to the Party that hears it, and of so little to him that speaks it, will yet be entertained with scorn and obloquy; *Take him away, he is not fit to live*, saies the enraged Jew; He is a *Babler, and an impertinent Prater*, saies the learned Athenian: *A meer Fanatick*, saies *Festus*; in short, without enquiring whether the *Resurrection*, thus declared, be possible or not; we hastily conclude that it is impossible; and upon that undoing Presumption rashly venture upon our own Damnation.

Act. 24. 25.

Isa. 22. 13.

Act. 22. 22.

And so much for the second Observation.

The Third Observation was, That the Doctrine of the Resurrection, however Incredible it may seem to Natural men, yet it is in it self highly credible, and may be evinced, even by that which Natural men do most pretend to, and that is Reason. Now the credibility of it will appear from these three Arguments:

Doct. 3.

I. It is Possible, it may be; God can do it.

II. It is necessary, it must be; There is no Providence without it.

H

III. It

III. It is evident and certain that it hath been; and so hath been, as wicah it demonſtratively proves that it ſhall be.

Reason 1.

The Firſt Argument, which proves the Doctrine of the Reſurreſtion Credible, is the Poſſibility of it, it may be; and this muſt be well weighed, in oppoſition to the *no*, or *How* of natural men, who think it implies a contradiction, that a body ſo ſcattered and diſperſed (one man ſometimes feeding upon another, and ſo confounding the Integral parts of both) ſhould ever be reſtored again, and thence conclude it impoſſible; as *Celfus* the Epicurean Philoſopher, and others.

Orig. 1. 1. & 7.

Now the Reſurreſtion will appear poſſible, upon a twofold account.

1. In reſpect of God, who raiſeth the Body.

2. In reſpect of the Body, which is raiſed by him.

1. The Reſurreſtion is poſſible, in reſpect of God who raiſeth the Body; he is able to do it; which is intimated here by our Apoſtle, *Why*, ſaith he, is it judged incredible with you, that *God ſhould raiſe the dead*: As if he had ſaid, did we affirm, that the body of man, like Plants, did riſe by any Seminal and Proliſtick virtue of its own, then none would wonder if you did deride and diſbelieve us: But we teach no ſuch Doctrine, we only affirm, that *God will raiſe the dead* by an immediate Act of his Omnipotence: And then, why ſhould this appear *incredible* to you? For cannot God do whatever he pleaſes? What ſhould hinder him, that he cannot as well raiſe the Dead, as make the Living? It is with this, that God himſelf doth ſilence *Sarabs* ſcruples: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* With this he doth repreſs *Moses* Diffidence, *Who hath made mans mouth? Or who maketh the deaf or dumb, the ſeeing or the blind? Is it not I the Lord?* As if he had ſaid, I that have done the greater, am I not able to do the leſs? I who have made mans mouth, am not I able to diſpoſe and fit it for what ends I pleaſe? With this the Angel doth relieve *Maries* ſurprize and wonder, when (upon the promiſe that ſhe ſhould conceive a child, without the knowledge of a man, which certainly was every whit as impoſſible as that I am treating of) ſhe began to ſtagger and Heſitate a little, *With God*, ſaith the Angel, *nothing ſhall be impoſſible*; and

Gen. 18. 14.

Luk. 1. 37.

for

for a further strengthening of her Faith, *Elizabeth* encourages her from her own experience, *Blessed is she that believeth; for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.* For, who is there that will presume to set limits to Gods Power? Or, that dare say to an Almighty Agent, hitherto canst thou come, but no farther? He that dares be guilty of so bold and blasphemous an Assertion, must likewise allow this contradiction, that a Finite Agent can conceive the utmost of an Infinite and Incomprehensible Perfection. As therefore in the Question, concerning *Mans Freewill*, and *Gods Predetermination* of Future Contingencies, I have by experience found it, that the best way to reconcile these two, is to deny neither, but to charge all doubts upon *Gods Omniscience*: For it is, and will be a doubt, which none but a Divine and All-knowing Understanding can resolve, How Man should *Act Freely*, (as we are conscious to our selves that we do) and yet not the least Action we do, but was *Predetermined* by God from all Eternity; which not only plain Texts of Scripture, but the Truth of Philosophy, and the bare series and subordination of Causes doth clearly demonstrate. Here, instead of tiring out our selves with vain Reasoning, and Uncharitable Reviling; the safest and most prudent way is, to shelter our selves under *Gods Omniscience*, for it is *dignus Numine Nodus*; and we cannot better discover our own Humility, or give God the glory of his Knowledge, than if we confess, that there are some things which only he can understand. So in the dispute concerning the *Resurrection*, when doubts arise, as too often they will; and the more we think of it, the stronger and the more puzzling will the Objections be; here the best way will be to have recourse to *Gods Omnipotence*, and to believe firmly, that God is easily able to do more than Man can conceive. Thus did the Apostle *Peter* answer those Scoffers, who began to question whether our Saviour would make good his Promise in coming to judge the World: *This*, saith he, *they are willingly ignorant of; that by the Word of God the Heavens were made of old.* As if he had said, These men have no reason to look upon Christs judging the World, and destroying it by fire, as so incredible a thing; for when God made it out of nothing, he did produce a greater Wonder. So let us not doubt but God is able to recover our

Ver. 45.

1 Pet. 3. 5.

scattered Dust, where ever it is lodged in the bowels of the Earth ; who did extract this admirable Frame of all things out of the wombe of Nothing.

c. 10. 10, 11,
12, &c.

Ver. 9.

Psal. 139. 14.

c. 14. 12.

2. The Resurrection is Possible, in respect of the Body which is to be raised, for that hath already passed a greater change than the Resurrection doth amount to : Since to pass from nothing to something is a much greater change, than barely to pass from Death to Life : Yet one we have already experimented, and why should we then doubt or despair of the other ? This Holy men in Scripture do often reflect upon, *Hast thou not, saith Job, poured me out as Milk, and cruddled me like Cheese ; thou hast cloathed me with Skin and Flesh, and hast fenced me with Bones and Sinews ; Thou hast granted me life, &c.* So that what he speaks a little before, *Remember, I beseech thee, that thou hast made me as the clay, and wilt thou bring me into dust again ?* may be inverted thus, *God hath made us as the Clay, and cannot he bring us out of the dust again ?* So David, *I will praise thee, saith he, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ; my substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, when I was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the Earth ;* wherein he eloquently describes the wonderful Art whereby God had made him : And cannot he repair these buildings of flesh and blood with the same ease with which at first he reared them ? Let him that doubts ask himself this question, Was there not a time when once I was not ! As David, *My members in continuance, or successively, were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.* And as God, without my taking care, without the expence so much as of a Miracle did joyn and cement these pieces ; did call for his Wind, and breath life into them ; did put in a portion of his Spirit into them, and give them understanding : So when they are severed, cannot he recall and reunite them ? Especially, since the Parts of our dissolved earth they are scattered only, they are not lost ; Thrown up and down, in a seemingly careless manner, but still they are under the eye of an All-seeing Providence, and laid up like sacred Reliques, *in tñs tñ ðñ tñ qñstñs, in Gods store-house,* to be fetched out thence when the Heavens shall be no more ; which is an Answer to Job's Melancholy ; *Man, saith he, lieth down, and riseth not till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out* of

of their sleep. Now we are taught, *that the Heavens shall be no more;* 2 Pet 3. and that is the time appointed for this Resurrection.

The Second Argument which makes the Resurrection seem *Reason 2.* credible, is from the necessity of it; It must be, there would be no Providence without it. For the Resurrection serves to demonstrate two prime Attributes of God, without which neither God could be honoured, nor the World governed.

1. It demonstrates Gods Mercy.

2. It demonstrates Gods Justice.

1. The Resurrection demonstrates Gods Mercy: For God hath appointed this order in the World, *that every thing should have a kind of Resurrection.* *The Sun, saith Solomon, ariseth, and the Sun goeth down, and hasteneth to the place where he arose. And, Unto the place from whence the Rivers came, thither they return again.* Thus Day dies into Night, and Night rises into Day: Winter is the Death of the Year, and Spring is its Resurrection. And many more such like instances there are in Nature. Now it would not be suited to the Grace and Mercy of our God, that every thing should *suos pati manes, have its Turns and Returns,* and the Noblest Creature of all, Man, should be altogether exempted! That every thing else should have alternate changes, and be repaired by dying, and Mans body only should be huddled up in the Horrour of Eternal Night! Sure that merciful Father, who shewed so much curious Architecture in contriving this Body, did not intend it should Act a Part only upon this short Scene of Life; for then certainly he would not have conjoyned it with a Guest which looks and breaths after nothing but Immortality. Our Saviour, prophesying of that Progress his Gospel should make after his decease, compares himself to a *Corn of Wheat, which if it fall into the ground, and dye not, it abideth alone: but if it dye, it bringeth forth much fruit.* And the Apostle, when that question was asked, *How are the Dead raised up?* Replies presently, *Thou Fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it dye;* implying it to be nothing else but direct Folly, to question that which in a thing so obvious as the sowing of Corn, might be concluded not only Possible but Necessary: Since Man is beyond many grains, and more especially the Object of Gods care and Compassion: For whose Instruction he hath scattered:

Ecl. 1. 5. 7.

Joh. 12. 24.

1 Cor. 15. 36.

scattered about the World so many Preludiums and Rudiments of a better Resurrection.

2. The Resurrection is necessary, because it demonstrates Gods Justice. Were it not for Future Judgment, nothing would be so full of Confusion and Disorder as the World. This Earth, in the present Polity and Frame of it; is nothing else but a meer Chaos, where Vice and Iniquity thrive, as in their own soyl, but Virtue and Piety do find neither Place nor Protection. It must be *ἐκ τῆς νύκτος*, That day of Reckoning to be reveal'd in Fire, which must absolve Providence, and scatter those Mists wherewith the beauty of it is now obscured and stained. It is this that must stop men in their Career of sin, and keep them honest in the dark: For in that sacred Irony of the Wise man, *Rejoyce, O young man, in thy youth, and walk in the waies of thy heart, and in the sight of thye eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgement;* which is all one as if he had said, Go young man, sin if thou darest, for thou must hereafter come to judgement. In this world, *All things come alike to all;* God scatters his good things with an undistinguishing hand, *tanquam Missilia Cæli*, as his Largeesses, and signs of his promiscuous Bounty, rather than marks of his especial Love. But future Judgement is Gods severing time, called by the Apottle, the time *ἀνατάσσοντος πάντων*, i. e. of setting all things right; of placing every thing upon its proper Basis, and giving all their due. Now to this the Resurrection of the body is necessary, *For we must all appear*, saith the Apottle Paul, *before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or evil.* In the Law we find, *That the soul that sinneth must dye;* and it is most just, that the body which did joyn in the sin, should likewise partake in the punishment. Those dear Allies were not separated in their good or evil doing, and therefore there is no reason they should be distinct in their Reward. *I carry about me*, saith the Apottle. *the dying of the Lord Jesus, (i. e. I lead a kind of dying and Calamitous life for his sake) that so the life also of Jesus might be manifested in my mortal Flesh.* In requital of all our Indignities, Imprisonments, Fallings, &c. if the soul only should be glorified, *we should not have a full reward;* which it is our duty to

look

Ecc1.11.9.

Ecc1.9.2.

Act.3.21.

2 Cor.5.10.

2 Joh 8.

look after. And therefore this Hand, this Tongue, this Eye, This, whatever it is, whereby God hath been either provoked or honoured, shall be quickned again, and put into the possession of a never-dying life, and fitted for the enjoyment of eternal either Joy or Torment.

Thirdly, The Last Argument which makes the Doctrine of the Resurrection credible, is from the evidence and certainty of it, since it hath been so, as that withall it necessarily implies that it shall be. For Christ is Risen, and taken possession of glory, not only for himself, but for his Followers. *Now if Christ be preached*, as the Apostle argues, *that he rose from the Dead, how say some among you, that there is no Resurrection of the dead?* As if he had said, If you barely considered the Resurrection in it self, you might then have something to plead in the excuse of your Unbelief, but since *Christ is Risen*, there is no longer any room left for the least dispute about it. For *Christ is risen*, either as a Judge, or as an Head; and therefore all must rise, the wicked, to be condemned; the faithful, to be saved by him.

Reason 3.

1 Cor. 15. 14.

V. Garbut, Remonst.

The Use of this may serve to demonstrate two things:

1. The Reasonableness of Christian Faith.
2. The Necessity of Christian Life.

This serves to demonstrate the Reasonableness of Christian Faith: As when God would convince the Heathen, that their Idols were not Gods, he challenges them to produce their *strong Reasons*, and to prove their Cause by Arguments: *Shew, saith he, the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods; yea, do good, or do evill, that we may be dismayed, i.e.* If ye are indeed, as your Worshippers suppose, Gods, then shew it by those infallible and unalterable signs of a Diety, viz. Your *Prescience*, and your *Power*. So may a Christian say in this Case, he may and ought to challenge the unbelieving World to produce their *strong Reasons* to declare their Cause, and to see whether they have so much to say, even in point of Reason, for the most clear and unquestioned part of their Opinion, as we have for the most confirmed of ours. For a Christian should not satisfy himself with a bare and naked Faith, grounding himself either upon Tradition, or the credit of his Teachers, but he should labour for himself to know both what, and why he believes. It is a general.

Use 1.

Isa. 41. 23.

- 1 Pet. 3. 15. general Rule the Apostle Peter gives, *Be ye alwaies ready to give an account of your Faith to every one that asks you.* And our Saviour though he did press his Followers to believe on him; yet he never did require from them, *ἔλεγον ὅτι ἀβελυστον ἡσιν*, as the Hea-then falsely objected: i.e. *An unreasonable and Untried Faith*; but where ever he gives the Command, he alleadges at the same time Reasons sufficient to convince the most obstinate gainsayer, such are the heavenliness of his Language, *Had I not*, saith he, *come and spoke unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin*; For his words, by their own confession, were such as never any man spake, and carried a clear Resemblance to the body he took, as being most humble in stile, and most sublime in sense. And therefore he complains of them, *Why*, saith he, *do ye not know ἁγιάσωμεν, i. e. discern who I am by my manner of discourse amongst you*; for certainly such words could not proceed from one who came to deceive the world; as those replied, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil.* Another Argument our Saviour uses to induce them to believe was his *Works*; which Nicodemus confesseth were such as never any man did. And our Saviour doth often appeal to their Testimony, as where he saies, *I have a greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.* And again, *If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin.* But, that which our Saviour most insisted upon was the Scriptures, to them he refers the Jews; out of these do the Apostles altogether argue; and to the search of these are all conjoyn'd; and still we can ground our belief upon their Testimony, whatever we boast of is not Faith but Fancy, and will not hold out in a time of Triall. Then the soul can only sit down satisfied, when by comparing the *Predictions of the Old Testament* with the *fulfillings of the New*, it can subscribe *probability*, I have examined, and find it true.

Now, because this is a matter of very great importance, and yet too much neglected, therefore I shall press it upon these Considerations:

1. This will sweeten our Obedience. Till we are satisfied as Men, we can never obey as Christians: For Faith is nothing else

else but another kind of Reason, whose Basis and Foundation is laid in humility : Therefore the Apostle calls that great Action of a Christian, when he doth no^r, as in the Old Law, sacrifice an Oxe, but himself up to God, λογικὴν λατρίαν, *a service suiting us as reasonable Creatures*. In things of Art, the hands will not do what the head doth not direct ; so in spiritual things, we quite mistake our way, if we think of going blindfold and hoodwinck'd to Duty. Ignorance and Implicite Obedience is a fit Sacrifice for the devil, whose kingdom is founded in darkness, when as *Regeneration* is nothing else but *renewed Light* : And the clearer Discoveries are made to the Understanding, the more pliant and obedient is the Will, and the more easie doth it find the Yoke. For this end, is Preaching and Propheying in a known Tongue commended, that there might be a Race of knowing Christians. And *Paul* would not so much as Sing, or Pray, or do any other Act of Religious Worship, with his Spirit only, but with his Understanding also. There cannot be a greater brand cast upon any ones devotion, than *to worship they know not what* ; for that is that which our Saviour doth especially blame the *Samaritans* for. 1 Cor. 14.

2. This is the best way to win upon others. And this principally concerns Ministers of the Gospel ; whom I may ask, in the Apostles words : *Thou that teachest another, wilt thou not teach thyself ?* Thou who commandest another to believe, wilt thou not give him a Reason, why he should believe, and so leave him without excuse ? Thus the Apostle bids *Timothy* be an example to the Faithful, ἐν λόγῳ, i.e. *in reasoning* : and gives this general charge, that *a man of God must be apt to teach, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves*. There are indeed some men of diseased minds, who have quenched in themselves all Principles, by which they may recover and be enlightened. But there are in the World many sober Dissenters, who stand off from embracing Christianity, meerly from the apprehensions they have, that the Tenets of it are Absurd and Unreasonable ; such as these must be won by Argument. Thus *Paul* dealt with the *Athenians*, who, when they desired to be better informed of his Doctrine, he makes a most excellent discourse to them concerning Providence, and clears by unanswerable Reason, that Rom. 2. 10.
1 Tim. 4. 12.
Act. 17. 20.

their way of Worship was false, because it begot in mens minds low and mean opinions of the Deity, as if he were confined to Place, or did take delight in outward Representations. Thus did our Saviour deal with *Nicodemus*. In short, Ignorance in a Gospel-Teacher is a capital crime; for our Saviour, when ever he preached, he did it with this Preface, *Hear and Understand*; and when his Disciples, were somewhat dull of Apprehension, he sharply reproves them, *ἀκούετε καὶ οὐκ ἐννοεῖτε, ἔσθι, τί ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἐννοεῖτε, ἔσθι, τί ὑμεῖς οὐκ ἐννοεῖτε*, *What are you, whom I design to be Lights and Guides of the World without Understanding.*

3. The want of this, is the cause why Christians stand so much at a stay, and make no better Progress. Total Ignorance is a certain sign of Perdition, *If our Gospel*, saith the Apostle, *be hid*, it is hid to them that are lost. Partial Ignorance is a sign of weakness, for there is that Light, that Evidence in our Religion, that if it be followed, it will alwaies fill the mind with fresh Discoveries. They who first read the Scriptures, are like such that see a glorious Palace at a distance, it is wrapped up in a Mist, and the Beauty of it lies concealed; but the nearer we approach, & the more intently we view it, the more is the Lustre of it manifested. The World, *i.e.* Carnal men, do count the Gospel *Maelar*, an Idoll, and a *Foolish thing*; but *Paul* tells us, and all true Believers find it to be *the Wisdom of God*, a Plot laid from all Eternity; for the effecting of which the World was made; and when the Mystery of Salvation, there declared, is perfected, the World shall be laid aside as an useless Scene. *Christ*, to invite our Study, doth stile himself *the Light of the World*; and who doth not see, that all who are not enlightened by him are covered with Darknes, Uncertainty, and doubting? But *John* calls our Saviour *ἡ ἀλήθεια*, *i.e.* in the proper signification of the word, *Reason*, he being that Eternal Fountain, from whom true Reason sprung; and by whom our lost and ruin'd Reason is repaired. *The Spirit*, saith the Apostle, *searcheth the depths of God*; *i.e.* the Spirit of God in man, makes him unquier and restless in his search, till he hath sounded those depths, which the Ignorant and Lazy World pass hastily over. How easily by this light would those Mists, about *Incarnation*, *Providence*, *Resurrection*, &c. which to this day perplex the disputing world, be
all

2 Cor. 4. 3.

1 Cor. 2.

all dispersed and scattered? As to this last, the Apostle here is very Positive, that he would venture all upon a Dispute, and that the best reason should carry it.

The second Use is to shew the Necessity of Christian Life ; *Use 2.*
and this is so clear from the Premises, that it need not be long insisted on. For, *If the Dead rise not*, the consequence which Paul brings in wicked men making is very Natural, *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye.* But if the dead rise, then Peter hath made a Rational Inference, *The end of all things is at hand, let us be sober, and watch unto Prayer.* For the time is coming, when the hidden things of our shame shall be brought to light ; *1 Cor. 15. 32.* this certainly, if once believed, would keep us honest in the dark ; one Sermon about it made *Felix* tremble, though, being a Roman, his Unbelief made him careless ; and his calling valiant. Did but men once give themselves leave to think of it, they would not so spend their daies, as if they had nothing but this Inch of time to provide for. For as our souls are alwaies on the wing ; so our bodies are not entirely our own ; but hereafter to be resumed again, and made either Cages for Unclean, or Mansions for Glorified Spirits. And therefore that unchangeable state, into which they shall once pass, is by all wise and knowing men most to be secured. So that I shall conclude in the words of the Prophet *Hosea* : *Who is wise, and he shall understand these things ? Prudent, and he shall know them ? For the waies of the Lord are right, and the Just shall walk in them : but the Transgressor shall fall therein.* *1 Pet. 4. 7.* *1 Cor. 4. 5.* *Hos. 14. 9.*

F I N I S.

Errata.

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